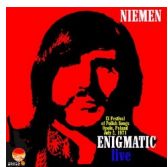


Czeslaw Niemen – Enigmatic Live Opole (1971)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 23 March 2010 17:47 - Last Updated Monday, 27 July 2020 12:37

Czeslaw Niemen - Enigmatic Live Opole 1971



1. *Italiam, Italiam* 05:03
2. *(handing in of "Gold Record" award for "Niemen Engimatic")* 06:10
3. *Bema pamieci zalobny - rapsod* 17:58
4. *I've Been Loving You Too Long* 08:37
5. *Nie jestes moja* 08:58
6. *Czlowiek jam niewdzieczny* 18:07

Personel:

Czeslaw Niemen - organs, voice

Tomasz Jaskiewicz - guitar

Janusz Zielinski - bass guitar

Jacek Mikula - organs

Andrzej Tylec - drums

Recital during IX Festival of Polish Songs, Opole, Poland
1971-07-02

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A milestone in Niemen's career and definitely one of the most significant albums in Polish rock music history! "Enigmatic" caused many controversies in the time of its release due to using in the first track - "Bema pamięci żałobny - rapsod" - the text of a poem by a great Polish romantic poet Cyprian Kamil Norwid. That was something unusual back then.

This track, to which the cover refers, is an over sixteen minutes long suite which you can divide in two parts. The first part is sort of a long intro (almost a half of the song!) in which Niemen creates a solemn atmosphere with a help of church bells and a heavy, expressive sound of his Hammond organs whilst the choir sings the motto of the poem (a quote from Hannibal - "Iusiurandum patri datum usque ad hanc diem ita servavi") and repeats it a couple of times. With the first words of the poem - "Czemu, Cieniu, odjeżdżasz..." - Niemen finally comes in after eight minutes and from this moment the music changes. The Hammond organs are drawn back in the background. The choir comes back after a while but doesn't advance to the foreground also. Here and there a bluesy guitar drops in. All this is emphasized by a distinct rhythm played on the percussion and warm bass play. Niemen's singing is very emotional (his main inspiration in this matter, as he admitted himself, were soul singers, like James Brown e. g. to whom he was compared).

You can find the poem "Bema pamięci żałobny - rapsod" in every Polish textbook and therefore Niemen's composition used to be played in schools during Polish language classes.

The remaining three songs are nice jazzy compositions, also based on poems by important Polish poets, in which Niemen is supported in his singing by a female vocal group Alibabki (with a very good effect, especially in choruses of the second track, "Jednego serca", where their combined voices sound really powerful). What is also noticeable is the presence of two saxophonists, young Michał Urbaniak being one of them (he plays also the flute).

All in all it's a very good effort and I'm giving it 4 stars (but for Polish prog fans it's a must!).

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