

Albion - Broken Hopes (2007)

Written by bluelover

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1. *XX / XXI* (1:02) 2. *The Place* (11:56) 3. *Once Upon A Time* (5:58) 4. *This Is It* (2:43) 5. *Angel* (4:56) 6. *I Am* (5:45) 7. *Turks Fruit* (5:56) 8. *This Is The Way Where We Go* (8:24) 9. *Near The End* (3:59) - Katarzyna Sobkowicz-Malec - vocal - Jerzy Antczak - guitars - Krzysztof Malec - keyboards + - Krzysztof Wyrwa - bass - Rafal Paszcz - drums - Aretha Chmiel – saxophone

Oto co znalazłem w materiałach reklamowych nowej płyty grupy Albion: „Utwory z tej płyty to kilka krótkich "migawek" obrazujących stan człowieka, który na pewnym etapie swojego życia podsumowuje to, co przeżył, osiągnął, widział, co otrzymał od losu. To walka z lękiem i obawami o najbliższych i samego siebie. To weryfikacja własnych uczuć i kłótnie z Bogiem. To pytania o sens i cel w obliczu niespełnionych marzeń i nadziei. To próba odizolowania się od nachalnego świata polityki, religii i idei, które nami sterują. To tęsknota za naiwną wiarą dziecka, któremu sprzedano bajkę o ideałach, do których tak naprawdę w dorosłym życiu nikt nie dąży. To stan zagubienia w momencie, gdy wydaje Ci się, że już wiesz dokąd zmierzasz i czego chcesz. To szukanie samego siebie...”. Czyż trzeba bardziej intrygującego wprowadzenia? Czyż trzeba jeszcze jakichś słów, by zachęcić do sięgnięcia po nowe wydawnictwo krakowskiej grupy Albion? Najlepszą zachętą jest sama muzyka. A więc od razu powiem, że polecam ją w ciemno każdemu miłośnikowi progresywnej muzyki przez duże M. ...
--- Artur Chachlowski, mlwz.pl

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Albion seems to have some problem keeping a stable line up through their short career so far. Only original members remaining are guitarist Jerzy Antczak and keyboards player Krzysztof Malec. Fortunately they still have singer Katarzyna Sobkowicz-Malec on vocals (who joined them for their second official CD). Former drummer Rafal Paszcz is listed as a guest musician. Unlike their line up thought, the quality of Albion's music only grew since its inception. If Albion (1995) was good and Wabiak Ciene (2005) was very good, Broken Hopes reaches the excellency level.

The group has matured both as players and as songwriters. Their music sounds like an interesting mix of early Quidam and latter day Satellite, with some strong Pink Floyd overtones. But make no mistake, they have their own sound and Katarzyna Sobkowicz-Malec is a gifted and unique singer, in a country that seems to have some of the finest prog female vocalists in the world nowadays. Oddly enough, guest bassist Krzysztof Wyrwa is one of the best features in this CD, with fine bass runs throughout the whole CD.

The arrangements are varied and tasteful, with lush keyboard passages and some great guitar licks and solos. Those guys do understand about writing songs and make their music emotional and creative. The CD is a little short for my liking, but the band did not waste a single note, something really hard to hear lately. The second track is the 11 minute epic The Place, one of the most beautiful prog songs I ever heard. I get chills down my spine every time I hear it. This tune alone is worth the price of the CD.

I'm glad to say Albion more than fulfilled their promising start. Broken Hopes was one of the best new releases in 2007. Fans of early Marillion, Pendragon, Quidam, Satellite, etc. should not miss this terrific work. Highly recommended for any music lover. --- Tarcisio Moura, progarchives.com

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