

Moody Blues - Octave (1978)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Steppin' In A Slide Zone* (John Lodge) – 5:26
02. *Under Moonshine* (Ray Thomas) – 4:57
03. *Had To Fall In Love* (Justin Hayward) – 3:39
04. *I'll Be Level With You* (Graeme Edge) – 3:44
05. *Driftwood* (Hayward) – 4:58
06. *Top Rank Suite* (Hayward) – 3:38
07. *I'm Your Man* (Thomas) – 4:17
08. *Survival* (Lodge) – 4:59
09. *One Step Into The Light* (Mike Pinder) – 4:26
10. *The Day We Meet Again* (Hayward) – 6:12

Personnel:

- Justin Hayward - vocals, guitar, keyboards
- John Lodge - vocals, bass, keyboards
- Ray Thomas - vocals, flute, tambourine
- Mike Pinder - vocals, organ, synthesizer - Graeme Edge - drums, percussion, vocals

The Moody Blues' resumed work together after a four-year hiatus and delivered *Octave* in 1978, which quickly became a hit but has also proved to be a very problematic album. Picking up where he left off on *Seventh Sojourn*, bassist/singer John Lodge generated a hit single (and also a solid album opener) with the surprisingly edgy (for this band) rocker "Steppin' in a Slide Zone." And Justin Hayward's "Had to Fall in Love," "Driftwood," and "The Day We Meet Again" -- the latter their best album closer since "Watching and Waiting" -- are also up to the standard one would wish for (and a bit of a surprise, coming in the wake of two major solo projects that should have depleted his song bag). Additionally, Graeme Edge's "I'll Be Level with You" gives the album some harder rocking moments, but that's not the real reason for buying Moody Blues records; rather, it's the sweep, the overall body of music and vision, psychedelic and romantic, punched up with some solid rock moments, and it's this larger arc of the music that is missing here. Ray Thomas' two songs are lackluster compared with his earlier work; and Mike Pinder's

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"One Step Into the Light" is so limited in its scope, compared to his earlier album-defining mystical explorations, that he's barely a presence on the album (and he did quit the band in the course of completing this record). As well as not quite offering an album's worth of good songs, the whole album lacks the depth and scope of preceding releases; 1978 would have been a little late for an album steeped in psychedelia, but the MBs didn't quite have anything to replace the latter element in the mix. Octave has its moments, and even a few very good ones -- and two great ones, on "Steppin' in a Slide Zone" and the place where the chorus comes in on "The Day We Meet Again" -- but they're not supported by enough that's worthwhile. ---Bruce Eder, AllMusic Review

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