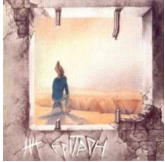


Epitaph – Epitaph (1971)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 18 April 2013 16:04 - Last Updated Monday, 12 February 2018 21:17

Epitaph – Epitaph (1971)



01. *Moving To The Country* - 5:11 02. *Visions* - 5:24 03. *Hopelessly* - 8:13 04. *Little Maggie* - 8:31 05. *Early Morning* - 10:01 06. *London Town Girl (single A-side, 1971)* - 3:25 07. *Autumn 71 (single A-side, 1973) (Cliff Jackson)* - 4:27 08. *Are You Ready (single B-side, 1973)* - 4:25 09. *I'm Trying (demo, 1970)* - 5:30 10. *Changing World (demo, 1970)* - 5:48 Personnel: - Cliff Jackson - guitar, vocals - Klaus Walz - guitar, vocals - Bernd Kolbe - bass, mellotron, vocals - Jim McGillivray - drums, percussion, vocals

Along with Lucifer's Friend, Blackwater Park, and other bands even more obscure, Epitaph were members of a curious fraternity of '70s German bands that featured British singers. Founded in Dortmund in late 1969 by vocalist/guitarist Cliff Jackson and his compatriot James McGillivray, plus locally bred bassist Bernd Kolbe, Epitaph were originally named Fagau's Epitaph, but decided to shorten it after moving to Hanover, where they eventually signed with Polydor. Second guitarist Klaus Walz joined the fold halfway through the sessions for their eponymous debut (released in 1971), which, along with its successor, *Stop, Look & Listen* (1972), contained only five lengthy tracks, largely comprised of post-psych progressive rock, spiced with occasional jazz accents and widespread twin-guitar harmonies. Neither LP succeeded at introducing the band to a significant audience, though, and McGillivray had quit by year's end, being replaced by German drummer Achim Wielert, just as Epitaph were beginning to experiment with a more compact and direct hard rock style. This was previewed by the two singles they released in 1973, but Polydor still decided it was time to cut their ties to the group, who surprisingly headed off to America almost immediately, drawn by the promises of a start-up indie label called Billingsgate.

Epitaph wound up recording their third and most critically acclaimed LP, 1974's *Outside the Law*, in Chicago, afterwards embarking on a tour of the U.S. with ex-Karthago drummer Norbert Lehmann -- only to have it rudely interrupted when Billingsgate went bankrupt. Drained by their string of bad luck and feeling lucky simply to escape back to Germany without being held responsible for Billingsgate's debts, Epitaph called it quits in January of 1975. But Cliff Jackson

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couldn't resist reviving Epitaph just a few months later, gradually rebuilding their damaged reputation until a revamped band -- rounded out by guitarist Heinz Glass, keyboardist Michael Karch, bassist Harvey Janssen, and drummer Fritz Randow -- finally re-emerged with 1979's Return to Reality album. Now pursuing a semi-heavy metal angle, this edition of Epitaph recorded two more, poorly received LPs (1980's oddly named See You in Alaska and 1981's Live), and then Jackson reunited the Outside the Law lineup for 1982's Danger Man. Also given to heavier rock sounds, and also unsuccessful, the latter finally proved to be Epitaph's, well, epitaph, barring very rare concert reunions thereafter. --- Eduardo Rivadavia, allmusic.com

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