

Novalis - Sommerabend (1976)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Aufbruch* (9:37) 2. *Wunderschätze* (Originaltext von Novalis um 1798) (10:41) 3. *Sommerabend* (18:17) a) *Wetterleuchten* (3:50) b) *Am Strand* (4:20) c) *Der Traum* (3:50) d) *Ein neuer Tag* (4:25) e) *Ins Licht* (1:52) - Hartwig Biereichel - drums - Detlef Job - guitars, vocals - Lutz Rahn - keyboards - Heino Schünzel - bass, vocals

Novalis incarnated one of the finest expressions of German symph prog, with their third album 'Sommerabend' being regarded by many as one of their top achievements. Their prog style is heavily influenced by Nektar, 73-75 era Pink Floyd - just similarly to their more veteran compatriots of Eloy -, and to a certain degree, 70-71 era Genesis and early BJH. The compositions are not too complicated, but despite their relative simplicity, the melody lines and harmonic textures are quite attractive and effective: Rahn's role on keyboards proves to be crucial at his point, creating the perfect ambience for Job's guitar solos and some of his own, while the rhythm section allows the themes breathe at ease, in an evocative manner. The opening instrumental is a powerful entry, IMHO, the best number in the album, since its energy is managed with gentle skill. 'Wunderschätze', whose lyrics are taken from a Novalis' poem, starts in a lyrical mood with a prominent role for acoustic guitar arpeggios: later, in the interlude and the closing section, things get a bit harder in order to prepare the way to the bombastic climax. Finally, the namesake 18-minute suite comprises the "best of both worlds", that is, the energy of track 1 and the lyrical introspectiveness of track 2. IMHO, this is the less successful number in the album, since it fails to create a more varied structure that would have made perfect sense otherwise, given the overall duration of the track. With too few tempo changes, only the cleverly crafted chord changes that take place now and then keep this suite from becoming monotonous: anyway, the performers' finesse is always there, and all in all, this is a very good album. Recommended, though not a masterpiece. --- Cesar Inca, progarchives.com

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