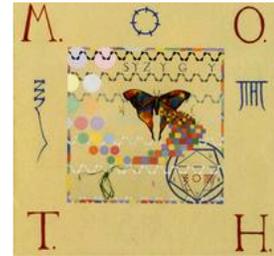




## Syzygy

### The Allegory of Light

#### Review by Mark Johnson



Progressive Rock CD Reviews

This is the second album by the artists formerly known as “Witsend.” Syzygy is a Cleveland, Ohio-based band made up of Carl Baldassarre, Paul Mihacevich and Sam Giunta plays piano. Al Rolik provides guest bass guitar on “Beggar’s Tale” and “Light Speed.”

As Syzygy’s (under that name) first release, it was like starting over, this time with more lyrics and some additional help from Al Rolik, who would later join the band to make it a four piece group. The album is a continued progression of the virtuoso talent that was showcased on the Witsend set Cosmos and Chaos. This time they attempted even larger epics and built a strong two part concept album in the template of progressive music’s masters. **This was the album where the group found their “game” and prepared to take their place amongst the pantheon of progressive greats.**

[Track by Track Review](#)

*In the Age of Mankind*

*Zinjanthropus*

“In the Age of Mankind” is the title of the second section or album side of music on the album and “Zinjanthropus” opens it with piano-like keys and guitar. Soon all manner of percussion effects, whistles, and complex keyboard effects create a chaotic rhythm of sound. This is one of the most interesting tracks on the CD. The mellotron-like keys mix well with the lead electric and bass guitar to create another very original melody and rhythm. Midway through the track things slow down and you get a wonderful keyboard solo which leads into an even better melody.

*Industryopolis*

“Industryopolis” begins with steel-like banging and some very cool electric guitar riffs mixed well with bass, drums and keys. They definitely set up a good industrial rhythm with this track. Midway through we get more of a movie soundtrack feel with the keys and the bass. The lead guitar and drums then rebuild the quicker pace.

*Forbidden*

Here is a beautiful acoustic guitar piece with Baldassarre providing vocals. The lyrics are melancholy, set within winter’s falling snow, but the music is some of the best on this “side” of the album. The bells at the end can only mean this was set around the holiday season.

### *Light Speed*

“Light Speed” is a fast paced electric guitar run which reminds me of some of Jimmy Page’s music soundtrack work from the 1980s. It is very cool soundtrack themed music.

### *The Journey of Myrrdin*

This is the second best track on the album. “Myrrdin” is the Welsh name for Merlin, the wizard of legend, making this “The Journey of Merlin.” It opens with flaming guitar and keys set to majestic drums and bass. This time, Syzygy tells the story with instruments only. And Merlin can rock! More of that cool Page like guitar continues to build this track as the playing is mixed with excellent medieval keys, strings, and flute like sounds. Later we get some of the best ELP-like keys I’ve heard since Emerson. The second section of the piece slows down to smooth electric guitar and some more ominous keys. Then a cool crushing guitar and keyboard sound dances around the soundscape.

### *Hidden Track*

A ghost track of wonderful keyboard sounds and effects plays a couple minutes after the journey ends, so don’t miss it.

### *The Allegory of Light*

#### *M. O. T. H.*

“The Allegory of Light”, is the first side of what used to be a two sided epic record album, with “In the Age of Mankind” as the second side. This nearly twenty minute epic opens with “M. O. T. H.” Spacey keys and mystical sounds help start the track with that wonderful bubbling mellotron like synth. It is a precursor to the bass, guitars and drums that eventually explode the soundscape into a glorious overture. After being completely immersed in sound, the acoustic and classic guitar mix take over with Mihacevich’s vocals lending words to the story. They proceed on to a bass, lead electric and keyboard extravaganza featuring Giunta at his very best. One of the early trademarks that make this band so unique is their ability to change on the fly. Don’t get too comfortable with that mellotron keyboard sound, because soon a power bass or lead electric chord will rip through to take the lead. They mix it up perfectly. Though they deliver some excellent riffs, they don’t dwell. This is dynamic music that keeps growing and changing within the piece. The mix of so many different time signatures would flabbergast most musicians. There is so much happening and we’re only at the beginning of this epic track. This number allows them to display their talent. The way they mix blistering guitar rock so well with deeply progressive riffs in such an intricate way, make this opener one of the best parts of this epic. But we’ve only just begun.

#### *Beggar’s Tale*

“Beggar’s Tale” changes course as the acoustic and classical guitar cut a new path set to Baldassarre’s vocals which flow like a river following the rhythm of the guitar. Tambourines add dynamics to the sound. You don’t want this short section to end, but then you would never get to the next movement.

#### *Distant Light*

They change course again, filling this with wonderful spacey keys and majestic sounds before the lead electric guitar and drums roar through the mix. Cool keys are mixed with launching lead electric guitars, bass and drums. There even sounds like a trumpet hidden somewhere in the keys.

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