



Syzygy

Realms of Eternity

Review by Gary Hill

Ohio's Syzygy have released a masterpiece in Realms of Eternity. This is an album that showcases the types of progressive rock elements that were so prevalent in the 1970's, yet there is a modern sensibility to it. The music here calls to mind different bands at different times. It's a very satisfying release with no real standouts – this music is that good. Of course, the band said that they were working on this album for four or five years. All that time and effort paid off because this is an exceptionally strong release.

Track by Track Review

Darkfield

Starting moody, this is also quite pretty and very classical in nature. The cut is developed into a modern prog sound that's very much based on guitar. The vocals here are potent, and a bit moody. At times this reminds me of Pink Floyd, but I can also hear Porcupine Tree and other sounds. Later there's a section that makes me think of Rush, but other music comes in over the top of this and expands it into both metallic and more classic prog territory. This is quite powerful and very dynamic. There's a killer fast paced keyboard dominated instrumental segment that leads to a reprise of the first vocal movement. There's an expansive jam later and then a return to the Rush-like segment (but with a much more powerful arrangement on it). This cut runs nearly eleven minutes and is full of changes and alterations. It is a classic example of how to take a song and continue to build it up to something well beyond its origins.

Vanitas

An instrumental, this comes in feeling a lot like something from Emerson, Lake and Palmer. It grows from there working through a number of changes and is eventually reworked into a more modern sounding motif. It becomes more ELP-like again later as they continue down this twisty progressive rock instrumental road.

Dreams

A smooth motif akin to fusion opens this up. They take it to something that reminds me a bit of Yes' "Changes" and then turn a corner into a jam that's a little Kansas-like. This keeps getting transformed and reworked as they continue. It drops to a rather ballad-like motif for the first vocals around the minute and a half mark. The multiple layers of vocals make me think a bit of Gentle Giant. There's actually a bit of a Scorpions vibe to the chorus later, but the song is purely prog. They take us through several changes and alterations as they continue. There are some moments later that seem close to ELP and others that seem more Kansas-like. This makes good use of its ten-plus minutes to pack in quite a few variants and alterations. They bring us back to the vocal section later, but continue to redefine the piece from there.

Echoes Remain

A much shorter cut, this is a tasty prog ballad. It's pretty and rather folky – sort of like the Strawbs.

### Dialectic

Coming in fairly mellow (rather like the previous piece), this works out into a dynamic and powerful progressive motif that reminds me a lot of Yes at times. There are more modern leanings, too (The Flower Kings, Echolyn). This is an intriguing piece of music that's very pretty and positive in its flow and ebb. A change later moves this out into something more like classic Genesis. There is an extremely extended instrumental movement on this that moves through Yes, Genesis, ELP and a lot of other bands in its sounds. This cut is of an epic scale (over sixteen minutes in length) and the longest piece on show here (other than the multi-part suite that follows it to close the set). It is arguably the best, too. The vocal movement that serves as the resolution is especially effective.

### The Sea (Suite)

#### Arranmore Isle

This short instrumental is a bouncy acoustic guitar dominated number that reminds me a lot of something from Steve Howe.

#### Overture

The opening movement here really makes me think of Neal Morse era Spock's Beard. It works through a number of variants as it continues. There are some tasty instrumental segments. This instrumental movement serves as the introduction to the next piece.

#### The Sea

As this powers out from the last cut, the Spock's Beard comparisons continue to be valid. In many ways this feels like something that could have come from one of their early albums. It has that whole multi-part suite aspect in place and musically feels cut from much the same cloth. It does work through some different movements, though, and at times I heard other bands (like Rush) more prominently. There's a tasty drop down to keyboard elements for a while.

#### The Morning Song

This comes in as a folky, acoustic guitar driven, balladic number. It grows gradually out from there. That motif is reworked, but holds the cut until a percussion based section that calls to mind early Marillion.

#### Variations Part 1

Here we have an instrumental jam that is very much in line with Emerson Lake and Palmer type music. It's fiery and twisty and very cool. It runs straight into the next cut.

#### Variations Part 2

Coming out of the previous one, this reminds me of Pentwater at times. It's got more of a metallic edge at points than the last half did.

#### Reflections

This short movement starts in very balladic form and grows up a bit from there into an effective vocal treatment. This is more classic rock meets ballad than pure prog, but it is still progressive rock. I'm definitely reminded of modern Marillion at times.

#### Finale

As this powers out from the previous movement I'm reminded again of Spock's Beard. There are some Yes-like sounds here and other elements to as this continues by reworking and rearranging itself. There is some killer guitar soloing on this and lot of other intriguing instrumental work.