

On Reflection

The Newsletter of the APEX

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"Theology begins where
music leads to."
- Martin Luther

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20 Years of Progress

Twenty years ago this month, the cornerstone of the musical movement that has come to be known as Progressive rock was introduced to a startled world. October 10, 1969 was the date that *In the Court of the Crimson King: an Observation by King Crimson* was released on Island Records in the United Kingdom and Atlantic Records in the United States.

You didn't have to even open the album to realize that this was something different; something large, powerful and important; something that wasn't going to fade from view. The cover, the most blatant and terrifying image of pure horror since the painting *The Scream*, grabs you instantly and does not let go. You cannot look at the cover indifferently and then move on. It holds you and sends its message right inside you. When the record is finally opened and placed upon the turntable, the same thing happens all over again.

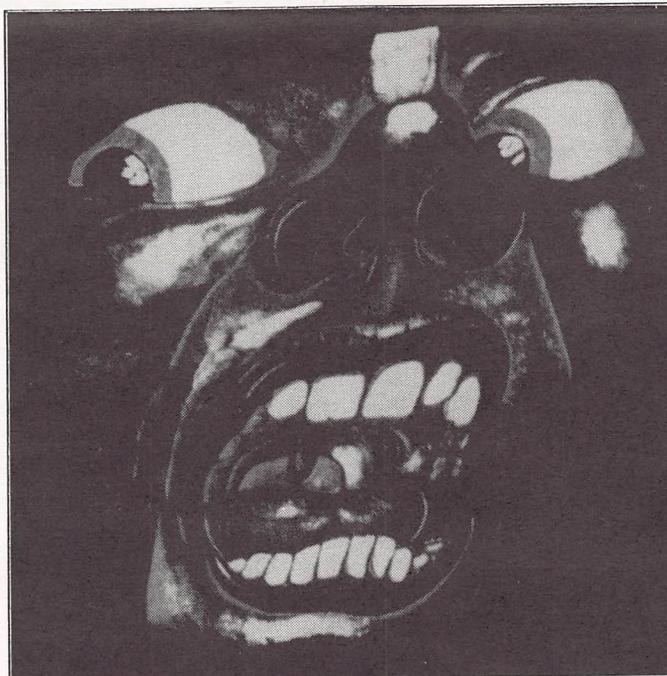
King Crimson were a group of virtual unknowns, except to a minute group of import freaks and chance observers who had heard *The Cheerful Insanity of Giles, Giles and Fripp* two years before. But that album held no harbinger of what to

expect from King Crimson. "An uncanny masterpiece," said Pete Townshend of the Who, whose rock opera *Tommy* was also released that year. The album, held as a major influence by bands such as Genesis, Yes, Rush, Gentle Giant and others, was the most forward-looking album up to that time. Such music had never been heard before. Such power had never been harnessed by a group of musicians. Such energy had never been transmitted to an audience.

On its twentieth anniversary, let us give thanks and praise to the work and its creators. Let us enshrine *In the Court of the Crimson King* as the first truly Progressive album, as one of the best and most astounding works by Progressive artists, and as a landmark recording in the history of rock 'n' roll music. Above all, let us play it. Often. ☺

The APEX salutes Robert Fripp, Ian McDonald, Greg Lake, Michael Giles, and Peter Sinfield.

Also Barry Godber, the cover artist, who died of a heart attack four months after the album was released, at age 24. "*The purple piper plays his tune/The choir softly sing/Three lullabies in an ancient tongue/For the Court of the Crimson King.*"



R E L A Y E R

LEVIN ILL; BERLIN STEPS IN

During the recently-completed ABWH tour, Tony Levin was stricken with food poisoning. The Denver show and probably a couple of others were cancelled and there was discussion about cancelling the rest of the tour. Bill Bruford saved the day by calling up his old buddy Jeff Berlin, who had two days to learn the entire show. Berlin appeared with the group on the Pay-Per-View broadcast and certainly held his own, although there was no drum/bass jam like there was with Levin. Bruford last appeared with Berlin on fusion guitarist Kazumi Watanabe's *Spice of Life* in 1986. Get well Tony, we're looking forward to your next project, whatever it is!

PIGS ON THE STRINGS

Objects of Fantasy (RCA Victor 7960-2-RC) is a just-released collection of Pink Floyd songs recorded by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Arranged, conducted and produced by David Palmer, who also plays keyboards on the album, this is a lame attempt to capture the drama and intensity of Floyd's music in an orchestral context. Similar attempts to classicalize the music of Jethro Tull (in which Palmer was once a member) and Genesis have met with mixed results. There is no question, however, that this recording is a bastardization that removes the drama and intensity, taking the listener out of the cosmos and into an elevator. Steve Hackett plays guitar on the album, probably out of pity.

DRAMATIC RELEASE

Drama, the great Yes album that really "Buggles" the mind, is now available on CD.

AWH ON ROCKLINE

Jon Anderson, Rick Wakeman and Steve Howe appeared on *Rockline*, the syndicated radio show produced by

Global Satellite Network, on September 7. The show mixed songs from the ABWH album with a medley of Yes songs and a live acoustic piano performance ("Gone But Not Forgotten") by Rick from one of his early '80s albums. The bulk of the show featured phone-in questions from listeners. Most of the questions were pretty goofy and starstruck, as you can expect, but it makes a nice tape. Which brings up the questions: *WHICH ONE OF YOU SENT ME THE TAPE, DO YOU WORK FOR GSN, AND DO YOU MIND IF I MAKE COPIES FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS ONE? LET ME KNOW AND THANKS AN AWFUL LOT!!*

JETHRO TULL TOUR DATES

Oct. 23	Troy, NY
Oct. 24	Rochester, NY
Oct. 26	Toronto
Oct. 27	Montreal
Oct. 28	Worcester, MA
Oct. 29	Portland, ME
Oct. 31	New Haven, CT
Nov. 1	Providence, RI
Nov. 2	Philadelphia, PA
Nov. 3	Hempstead, NY
Nov. 6	Auburn Hills, MI
Nov. 7	Cleveland, OH
Nov. 8	Pittsburgh, PA
Nov. 9	E. Rutherford, NJ
Nov. 11	Ann Arbor, MI
Nov. 12	Columbus, OH
Nov. 14	Chicago, IL
Nov. 16	Milwaukee, WI
Nov. 17	St. Paul, MN
Nov. 19	Cincinnati, OH
Nov. 21	Birmingham, AL
Nov. 22	Atlanta, GA
Nov. 24	Miami, FL
Nov. 26	Tampa, FL
Nov. 28	New Orleans, LA
Nov. 29	Houston, TX
Nov. 30	Dallas, TX
Dec. 3	Denver, CO
Dec. 5	Los Angeles, CA
Dec. 8	San Diego, CA
Dec. 10	San Francisco, CA

RUSH COMPILATION DUE

Rush is apparently changing record labels and to cap off their illustrious career with Mercury, the record company is issuing a comprehensive 2-CD/LP/Cassette compilation called *Chronicles*. It should be in stores on October 3. There are cuts included from each of their studio albums (even the first one without Neil Peart), plus three unreleased tracks: "What You're Doing" (live), "A Passage to Bangkok" (live), and "Take Off featuring Geddy Lee" from Bob and Doug McKenzie's comedy album *Great White North*. In all, there are 28 tracks prepared from the original master tapes, with an essay by "noted rock historian" John Swenson. ☺

ON REFLECTION: The Newsletter of The APEX, is published each month by The Aficionados of Progressive EXcellence (APEX).

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20 years

Peter Sinfield: The Prophet Wrote

King Crimson has gone through various evolutions during its lifetime. Each division has brought with it the visions of a different lyricist. As the wordsmith for the first King Crimson, Peter Sinfield articulated the often apocalyptic musical energies into statements that speak directly to the imaginations and sensibilities of the audience. On the anniversary of the first King Crimson recording, we present this brief profile of Peter Sinfield.

When Ian McDonald joined Giles, Giles and Fripp in 1968, he brought along his friend, Peter Sinfield. Judging from the lyrical content of *The Cheerful Insanity of Giles, Giles and Fripp*, the addition of Sinfield as lyricist for what was soon to become the inaugural lineup of King Crimson played a major role in focusing the direction of the group's music. There were issues to explore and realities to confront, and Sinfield brought to the fledgling King Crimson the dark observations that the foreboding music suggests.

Sinfield's style is simple, basic even. The rhyme scheme and iambic meter used in "Epitaph" and "In the Court of the Crimson King," in fact, are exactly the same. But the main quality about his lyrics is the imagery. Rather than complaining that "our words are not heard," he says "I talk to the wind." The emphasis is on the voice of the hero instead of the deafness of the establishment. Likewise with "Confusion will be my epitaph." The speaker is not relating a tale of the revolution, he's telling the listener the effects it has on all of us.

The most sonically annihilating track on the first album, "21st Century Schizoid Man," is no lyrical masterpiece, but it has a strength that comes from the bareness of the imagery. The short, blunt verses bring out the horror of the subject: "Blood rack, barbed wire/Politicians' funeral pyre/Innocents raped with napalm fire/21st Century Schizoid Man."

Sinfield's work on the second album, *In the Wake of Poseidon*, continues his themes: an evil world that imposes its anger on innocent people, and eulogistic

verses of lost ideals. "Pictures of a City," musically as well as lyrically, is the younger brother of "Schizoid Man" ("Concrete cold face cased in steel/Stark sharp glass-eyed crack and peel"). The title track tells of the desecration of the earth from hate, greed and war: "Heroes hands drain stones for blood to whet the scaling knife/Magi blind with visions light net death in dread of life/Their children kneel in Jesus till they learn the price of nails/Whilst all around our mother earth waits balanced on the scales." In "Peace," Sinfield mournfully recalls the images of peace, so far removed from the world of '69-'70: "Peace is a stream from the heart of a man/Peace is a man, whose breadth is the dawn/Peace is a dawn on a day without end/Peace is the end, like death of the war."

Crimson's third album, *Lizard*, shows a departure in style. The music is sparser and the lyrics paint symbolic portraits that take the reader onto another plane of meaning. "Cirkus" I once analyzed for an English class in high school (the teacher was a Crimson fan!). What I found in it was a politician (Nixon?) acting as ringleader, directing people's attention where he chooses while chaos ensues out of sight, and then stifling critics and demonstrators: "Strongmen by his feet, plate-spinning statesman, acrobatically juggling/Bids his tamers go quiet the tumblers lest the mirror stop turning."

Another song, "Happy Family," is about the breakup of the Beatles: "Uncle Rufus (Ringo) grew his nose, threw away his circus clothes/Cousin Silas (George) grew a beard, drew another flask of weird/Nasty Jonah (John) grew a wife (Yoko)/Judas (Paul) drew his pruning knife." On the cover, there is a painting of the characters around the "i" of "Crimson." An extended work, "Lizard," takes up all of side two. In the first part, "Prince Rupert Awakes," Sinfield's words are treated to a rare delight: Jon Anderson in what is arguably his finest-ever vocal performance.

Crimson had begun as a cooperative music venture, but *Poseidon*, *Lizard* and 1972's *Islands* were composed almost exclusively by Sinfield and Fripp. *Islands* turned out to be the final Crimson album for which he wrote. His gradual turning away from the day's events and into the realm of his imagination and desires is clearly demonstrated here. "The Letters," "Formentera Lady," "Ladies of the Road," and "Islands" show a deeper concentration on personal relationships, both the meaningful and the fleeting. "Letters" and "Ladies" tell of cheating and deceit, the latter song through groupies and hangers-on: "All of you know that the girls of the road/Are like apples you stole in your youth." "Formentera Lady" and "Islands" ("Beneath the wind turned wave/Infinite peace/Islands hold hands/Neath heaven's sea") dwell more on the mysterious and fragile elements of the emotional side of caring.

Sinfield had remained friends with Greg Lake after the latter left Crimson and so ELP's Manticore label was a logical place for a Sinfield solo album to appear. *Still* came out in 1973 and the roster of artists reads like a King Crimson reunion party: Lake, John Wetton, Boz, Ian Wallace, Mel Collins, Keith Tippett and Robin Miller are all among the credited. Sinfield does all lead vocals (Lake does joint lead on the title track) and plays 12-string guitar and synthesizer. His vocals are not bad but his phrasing is over-precise. His voice wraps tightly around the words like spandex pants on a big butt. It's a bit much.

The first track, "Song of the Sea Goat," is based on a tune by Vivaldi, the same one that Steve Howe performs on *The Steve Howe Album*. "Under the Sky" was co-written with Ian McDonald way back before the name King Crimson was even bestowed. It was one of several demos that were cut before Lake joined (the version of "I Talk to the Wind" from *Young Person's Guide to King Crimson* with Judy Dyble on lead vocals was cut at the same time).

continued p.8

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Jethro Tull: Living in the Present

by John Collinge

The mercurial career of Jethro Tull may be headed for a new era of stability if their new LP, *Rock Island*, fares as well as 1987's gold-certified *Crest of a Knave*.

Rock Island reprises the blues-rock stylings of its predecessor, continuing the recent Tull trend away from the folk and classical influences that dominated earlier works like *Minstrel in the Gallery* and *Songs From the Wood*. Still, the album is unmistakably Tull, with plenty of high-octane flute/guitar interplay, complex arrangements and the ever-enigmatic lyrical approach of Ian Anderson. With more than 50 minutes of music, the new release shows Tull remaining true to its Progressive heritage, especially on cuts like the epic "The Whaler's Dues" and the title track.

Tossed in for commercial appeal are a couple of stomping rockers, the

single "Kissing Willie" and "The Rattlesnake Trail," which open side one. The most impressive effort of all, though, could be "Another Christmas Song," a truly grand and touching seasonal tune that possesses one of the most awesome flute hooks Anderson has penned to date.

In a Chrysalis Records press release, Anderson was quoted on a number of topics. On the 1960s-'70s Progressive scene: "I think if Jethro Tull were a young unknown band looking for a record deal today, we wouldn't get out of the starting blocks. We'd be considered far too eclectic and we'd probably be unwilling to do the silly things you have to do in order to become successful.

"I think we benefitted from coming of age during a period when bands were allowed the space to carve out their own territory, and that's one of the things

that's made it possible to carry on.... We seem to operate outside of most of the normal conventions of the music industry."

On last year's controversial Grammy win for best Heavy Metal album: "The award made at least some sense to me. Jethro Tull has always been sort of a heavy metal band with mandolins."

The Tull lineup remains the same as that which graced American stages during the 1988 20th anniversary tour: Anderson on vocals, flute, and acoustic guitar; Martin Barre on guitars; Dave Pegg on bass; Doanne Perry on percussion; and Martin Allcock on keyboards. Allcock and Pegg are also full-time members of British folksters Fairport Convention. 

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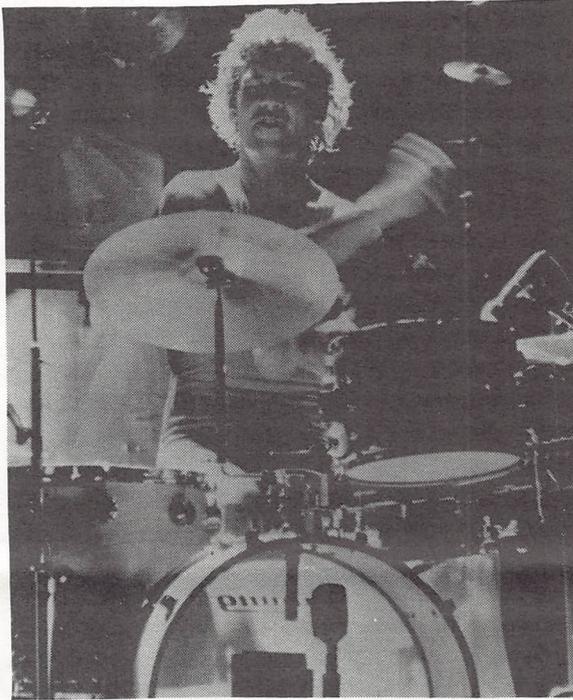
Echoes... Echoes... Echoes... Echoes... Echoes...

Progressive Dream Band Part IV

TOP 3 DRUMMERS

As before, votes were given points on a 5-3-1 scale. The numbers shown are points and not number of votes.

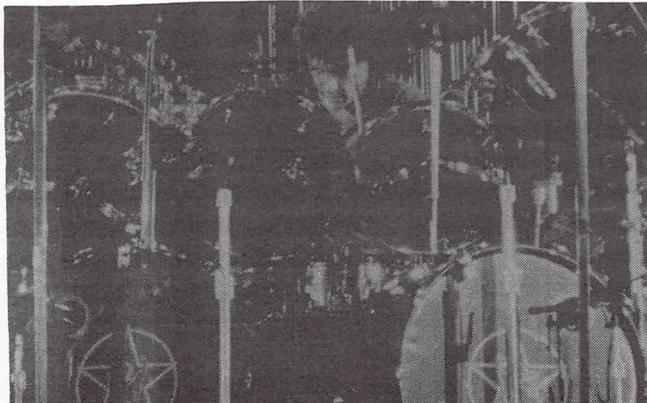
1. Bill Bruford - 62



2. Carl Palmer - 22



3. Neil Peart - 14



Other vote-getters:

- Phil Collins - 7
- Daniel Denis (Univers Zero) - 5
- Rod Morgenstein (Dregs) - 5
- Jurgen Rosenthal (Eloy) - 5
- Barriemore Barlow (Jethro Tull) - 3
- Michael Giles - 3
- Jon Hiseman (Coliseum, Tempest) - 3
- Simon Philips (J. Beck, S. Clarke, 1989 Who tour) - 3
- Pip Pyle (National Health) - 3
- Christian Vander (Magma) - 3
- Terry Bozzio (Zappa, U.K.) - 1
- Joachim Ehrig (Grobschnitt) - 1
- Guy Evans (VDGG) - 1
- Ian Mosely - 1
- Alan White - 1
- B.J. Wilson (Procol Harum) - 1

Voters:

- Frank Jarvis, Jason M. Rubin, Marc Rains, Larry Crasnick, Clark Faville, Mitchell Ragone, Mark Norton, Linda Shultz, Scottt Gold, Tony W. Arnold, Kathy Grimm, Gregg Sichner, Steve Wolff, Ken Stuart, Michael P. Dawson.

NEXT MONTH:

TOP 3 VOCALISTS (MALE OR FEMALE)

BIRTHDAYS

- Oct. 2 Mike Rutherford b. 1950
- Oct. 9 John Lennon b. 1940
- Oct. 10 Thelonus Monk b. 1917
- Oct. 14 Justin Hayward b. 1946
- Oct. 19 Keith Reid b. 1945
- Oct. 25 Jon Anderson b. 1944

August 6, 1989 - Great Woods, Mansfield, MA

Concert Review: ABWH - A Yes by any other name by Marc Rains

I just spent over two hours with Yes; sorry...make that Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman, Howe. No matter what you call them, the energy and spirit that ruled was undeniably "Yes." The joy on Jon Anderson's face as he sauntered through the crowd singing "Time and a Word" said it all. There is a time and that time is now. At least it was for the more than 12,000 people who shared an incredible evening of "Yes Music Plus."

This show was created with the audience in mind. The new songs were nicely intertwined with classic Yes standards and everything worked. Anderson opened the show with a medley that contained the only real surprise of the evening: "Owner of a Lonely Heart" was tucked in between "Time and a Word" and a track from the new album, "Teakbois."

As Jon exited to one side of the stage, Steve Howe entered from the other. "The Clap" and "Mood for a Day." What else. The fingers don't seem quite as nimble and age shows on his face, but the night is still young. Then enters a thinner and seemingly healthier Rick Wakeman. His stint includes bits of "Madrigal" and other chunks of hugeness. It's at this point that I am reminded of what was missing from 90125 and *Big Generator*: lush, lavish keyboard sounds. Welcome back Rick!

With these moments past comes the knowledge that Bill Bruford is next. Those who were disappointed by Bill's subdued presence on the album had nothing to fear. For the first time this night, everyone is on stage, and "Long Distance Runaround" takes shape. Then the opening of "Heart of the Sunrise" and into a true solo. It doesn't take long for Mr. Bruford to demonstrate why he is one of the most respected drummers of the rock era. While apparently hitting anything he wants in any order with the least possible effort, you know he has a master plan behind what he plays. Or, more accurately, what he *isn't* playing. His genius, his power shows in the spaces

he leaves, the hits that you expect but never come where you thought would. Through the rest of the night, this becomes ever clearer. His discipline shines on the older tracks, as he recreates and renews them.

Now during "Birthright," and throughout the rest of the set, we see a group fully content to rock out. "Birthright" was inspired by the aboriginal plight in Australia and the repressed majority in South Africa. Musically it's as much of a soulful experience as Jon makes mention of during "Ritual" on *Yesshows*.

At this point it's prudent to mention the additional musicians on the stage. Milt McDonald on guitar and Matt Clifford on keyboards backed Jon during his medley but then seemed vestigial to the show. And then their purpose becomes clear. "And You and I" was done as it was meant to be. Steve had the opportunity to change from acoustic to electric to steel guitar without any of the overall sound being lost in the hasty transitions. Howe also had time to focus on where he was in any given song without having the vocal harmonies to worry about.

A kick-ass version of "Your Move/All Good People" closes out the first set. I know how much fun I'm having, but the look of pride on Tony Levin's face says more than words can describe. After seeing Levin twice with King Crimson and once with Peter Gabriel, I was used to his jumping and leaping with either bass or stick in hand. But I have never seen him smile so much and move around the sides of the stage as he does tonight.

Intermission comes and we finally get a chance to breathe and reflect on what a night of perfectly executed Progressive music can do for one's spirit. The relaxed aura was short lived, as the houselights went down and the realization of "Close to the Edge" engulfed my body. I had heard rumors that this particular song was to be a part of the

evening, but I couldn't have prepared myself for what I got.

"Close to the Edge" has always been very special for me. Above and beyond the obvious, I used part of the second verse as my high school yearbook quote. To once again see my favorite people perform my favorite song was almost too much for me to handle. As smoke spilled out from the stage over the audience, I lost it. This was truly the most remarkable sight I had ever seen on any stage. The echoing vocals, the intricate instrumentations, and the absolute perfection in the synergistic marriage of the two is truly a major musical achievement.

After the longest standing ovation of the night, "Themes," another track from the new album begins. This song can be taken as a direct jab at the huge machinery (did someone say "big generator?") of the music industry, whose conventions say that these people are dinosaurs; that there is no place for a song over three minutes long; that the skill of an extended solo is no longer wanted. Wrong, wrong and wrong again. The crowd is enthralled as "Themes" leads to the "indulgence" of Bruford and Levin. The two "showed off" for more than five minutes, proving once again that a rhythm section needn't be saddled with the monotony of keeping time and that this one is as good as it gets.

The duet leads right into the "hit," "Brother of Mine." All you can ask from the live version of a single is that it is done well with meaning and enthusiasm. It was. That was followed by a touching spoken intro by Jon to "Meeting," bringing the kinetic energy and the decibels down for another needed breather. Short-lived, I might add, as "Heart of the Sunrise" begins in earnest. The tune was given the intensity and drive so deserving of a classic of this nature. From the driving "Bolero"-like beginning to the touching vocal patterns weaving back and forth, we are brought to yet another special high.

continued p.8

ABWH Review cont.

All this and it's still not over. "Order of the Universe" is probably my favorite track on the new album, and live it turns into another chance to rock out. The rest of the night is obvious to me. I know that "Roundabout" is next. Even though it's been overplayed and overkilled by radio for year, it's still a great song and thanks to Milt McDonald's presence on electric rhythm, Steve could play the opening on acoustic, they way it's supposed to be done.

The band leaves the stage but we all know better. There is still one thing left and we're not leaving without it. "Starship Trooper" has always been the epitome of an encore. The fact that the latest Yes raped the song on its last tour was a grave miscarriage of justice. "Starship Trooper" was meant to be

played a certain way and it was meant to be played in full, not just a portion. It was written to be a showcase and a showcase it is. Throughout this piece we are reminded why these musicians were and are considered among the best on the instruments they play.

To say I was satisfied, fulfilled, happy wouldn't do the feeling justice. This was one of the happiest nights of my life and without a doubt the best concert I've seen. As I staggered away into the parking lot, one thought prevailed: "Go ahead, Chris and Trevor, top that!" ☺

Sinfield cont.

Many of the songs are filled with dense lines of poetry fraught with elongated structures and the calling forth of the muse: "I need to suck the breasts of time and freeze the milk in ink." Iambic heaven. In "Still," he ponders his role/obligation as a writer: "Still I wonder how it is to be a bird/ Singing each dawn's sweet effusions/ Flying far away when all the world has stirred/Yet seek no vain conclusions."

On the whole, it's a very nice album and well worth locating. After *Still*, Sinfield helped out on ELP lyrics on *Brain Salad Surgery*, *Works Vol. 1*, *Works Vol. 2* and *Love Beach* (that album really exists, doesn't it?). I know of nothing that he's done in the 1980s. But for the time he was most active, Peter Sinfield played a significant role in establishing the imagery and the phraseology of the Progressive genre. ☺

The APEX

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"Because Catalogs Aren't Forever"