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Crack The Sky: Ostrich

Ask ten different prog fans what prog is and the brave ones fool enough to answer will all come up with completely different interpretations of the music they love. So are Pittsburgh's Crack The Sky progressive? Definitely! However whether they're "prog", well that's for each of us to decide on our own. Hopefully what we'll agree on however is that *Ostrich*, the latest offering from a band whose history stretches back to the mid 70s as Arcangel, is one of the their best and pretty damn excellent from start to finish.



The CtS recipe is actually quite straight forward, even though this is a band who like to veer from style to style as they go from song to song. Basically whatever title Crack The Sky choose to bestow on a track, whether that be "Your House In On Fire", or "King Of The Rodeo", it's name is repeated as often as possible in the chorus and in a way that will have you singing along at the top of your voice from the first run through. Those two songs are a good way to illustrate just how effective that blueprint can be, whether it is presented in ranging, laidback bluesy style ("King..."), or the frantically off kilter jazz like soul of "Your...". Both set a scene, both convince from start to finish, yet both are as different as you could imagine. From there we have a choked riff and bass splattered "Don't Ask", which to be fair actually picks out a different phrase than the song title for you to hang your hat on, with "I don't wanna be your man" sung over and over, while "Big Elephant" funks a groove that is so humungous, an adult elephant could get lost for a fortnight in it!

The album sounds vast and at volume the whole experience knocks down walls, although with three guitarists (and a baritone guitarist who also plays bass), keyboards, concertina, ukulele, drums and whistles, you'd be disappointed if things were restrained and apologetic.

Impressively the overriding craving you have when *Ostrich*



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is complete, is to wind the CD player back to beginning and start the jaunt through funk, pop, rock, prog and jazz all over again. Ultimately what makes it such an irresistible trip is the joyous nature with which the music is delivered and the manner in which it sweeps you up. A lot of that credit goes to the vocals, both lead and back-up, which all of the band members contribute to, taking themes that in the wrong hands could end up humourless and flat and inflating them into gargantuan slabs of fun.

Take your head out of the sand, put aside the wacky cover and less than obvious album title and come and revel in music that is performed magnificently, and delivered in the finest style. One listen and you'll be back for more - there's no doubt about it!

Track Listing

1. The Box
2. Happy Happy Happy
3. Your House In Fire
4. King Of The Rodeo
5. Big Elephant
6. Holding My Breath
7. Pole Dancing At The Hollywood
8. Under The Hood
9. Don't Ask
10. Ali's Song

Added: March 27th 2013

Reviewer: **Steven Reid**

Score: ★★★★★

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Crack The Sky: Ostrich

Posted by **Steven Reid, SoT Staff Writer** on 2013-03-29 09:39:57

My Score: ★★★★★

My mistake Jordan.

Thanks for the correction.

>> Reader Comments:

Crack The Sky: Ostrich

Posted by on 2013-03-29 20:52:33

My Score: ★★★★★