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Todd Rundgren

State

Review by G. W. Hill

I didn't know what to expect here. Well, I mean, you know going into a Todd Rundgren album to a degree what the vocals will sound like. You also know it's going to be very high quality. But the man has been all over the musical spectrum in his career, so beyond those things, it's anyone's guess. Well, this sits somewhere between electronic music and progressive rock. I'd say there's enough prog to land it under that heading. It's all quite potent, though. This is another great album from a man who doesn't seem capable of anything other than greatness.



Track by Track Review

Imagination

There is sort of a symphonic prog opening here that builds up gradually a bit like a cross between vintage Genesis and the start of Yes' "Close to the Edge." Then it modulates to something that makes me think of "The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway." Percussion joins a bit before the one minute mark and then some heavy, almost industrial meets prog sounds enter. It drops way down to atmospheric modern prog sounding stuff for the vocals. It modulates between those two extremes as it continues. The thing just keeps evolving. This is an incredibly dynamic, diverse and powerful piece of music.

Serious

Electronica, funk and a lot of other diverse sounds merge on this cool tune. It's got an almost Buggles like vibe to it at times. It's infectious and effective and again, very dynamic and diverse.

In My Mouth

There's almost an electronic dance vibe here. Yet, I'm also reminded of 10cc and ELO in some ways. It's definitely got a real groove to it. Of course, it's also trademark Rundgren.

Ping Me

While Rundgren's vocals are often very soulful on this tune, it's almost an electronic prog meets classical and electronic music number. It's quite a powerful piece in terms of hooks and emotion.

Angry Bird

As this starts I'm definitely reminded of Kraftwerk. There's definitely a techno groove to this and the vocals make me think of The Cars.

Smoke

The sound that starts this makes me think of Judas Priest's "Turbo Lover."

That gives way to an electronic meets dance kind of number. The lyricals and vocals are pretty typical Rundgren greatness.

Collide-a-Scope

This is a killer tune that's high energy and a great cross between progressive rock and electronic music. It's got some techno in the mix and is a really killer screamer.

Something from Nothing

Dynamic and diverse, this is very much electronic progressive rock. It's bouncy and playful, but also quite stripped back in a lot of ways. There are some potent female vocals in the mix on this and the arrangement really gets powerful as that part carries onward.

Party Liquor

Now, this one is definitely a party dance vibe. Many of the vocals are trademark Rundgren, though.

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Sir Reality

This begins with some atmospheric sounds and there is almost a creepy effect to it. As it builds out from there, though, the arrangement gets lush and the whole thing builds nicely. The guitar that rises up is massively proggy. Then it drops way down for the vocals. This is electronic progressive rock as that works outward. This is another that builds out into some killer modern prog. It's a powerful tune, ending things in great style.

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