

The Rock

SBB

Metal Mind Productions / MVD, 2007

<http://www.sbb.pl/>

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SBB is Poland's leading progressive rock trio. They've been at it since the early 70s, broke up in 1980, and reformed in the 1990s. In the past, SBB was an established name in Europe; nowadays their music is reaching the rest of the world.

SBB is an international band, consisting of Polish keyboard player/bassist/vocalist Jozef Skrzek, Greek guitar player Antimos Apostolis, and newly added Hungarian drummer Gabor Nemeth (taking over from Paul Vertico). An unusual mix, but it works, and more power to them.

The Rock

is truly a wonderful record, combining all of the elements this band is known for. Long-time SBB fans know what to expect from this group, but the band still manages to surprise with structure and arrangements, keeping the band's sound fresh.

It's very interesting how multilayered this album is. It's hard to pick this out after a first listen, but it's definitely there once you understand this album's essence. The music itself is very mood-oriented; the songs all differ from one another, yet there's some sort of invisible chain holding it all together. This perhaps is the charm of SBB -- the band is not afraid to break established barriers, even so late in their career. This should be admired. You reform after breaking up because you still have something to say, and SBB definitely has something to say.

The songs on this record are performed in three languages, with Polish and English dominant. One track is split into a duet between Skrzek singing in Polish and Tamas Somlo (from Hungarian Locomotiv GT -- another great band) singing in Hungarian. It is important to mention the uniqueness of Skrzek's voice -- whether he sings or just vocalizes he has this unbelievable calming effect on the listener. Also, it makes no difference what language he performs in -- his voice is more like an instrument adding color to the music.

The album opens up with the title track, a very upbeat song. The following track, "Burning Minds," sets the tone for the album. The dreamy nature of this song is what's best about SBB, not to mention the deep nature of the lyrics, and impressive delivery. The theme of this song is bit reminiscent to what the band did on their 1980 album *Memento z Banalnym Tryptykiem* (the Polish title), but it works so well here. In "Heaven And Hell," SBB begins to experiment more and really takes the listener into the unknown.

The instrumental side of this record is just incredible. These musicians understand each other perfectly. The record sounds so natural and very organic. *The Rock* actually feels like much of it could've been improvised because of its free feel. I can only imagine the heights these songs could be taken to in a live setting.

I've been a long-time fan of this group, but if you'd like to hear one of rock's best kept secrets, then you should investigate SBB yourself.

Rating: [A](#)

User Rating: Not Yet Rated

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