



PROG ROCK PARADISE: Double CD sets remind listeners of Poland's mighty Progressive Rock scene!



When the average music listener thinks of **Prog Rock**, most likely the bands **Yes, Genesis, Emerson Lake & Palmer** and **King Crimson** spring to mind first. The more 'educated' music fan (ie: geek) will probably throw in names like **Van Der Graaf Generator, Gentle Giant** and maybe some more modern acts like **Marillion** and **Dream Theater**. But, like any music scene, things get exciting when you look beyond the U.S. and UK shores and start digging deeper into bands from other countries like Italy, Germany and Poland. While English lyrics may grace most of the releases, some of the bands do sing in their native tongue. But isn't it the music and musicianship that matters most?

Metal Mind Productions is a Polish label and one of the finest Rock/Prog/Metal labels in the universe. Whether you love Thrash Metal, Death Metal, classic Heavy Metal, AOR or Prog, Metal Mind has something you'll slobber over. Yes, they did sign a band by the name of **Anal Stench** (insert your favorite 'stink' joke here) but they also handled some amazing reissues by AOR and classic Metal bands like **Giuffria, Boulevard, Lillian Axe** and **Tank**. In fact, their catalog is so varied that its always exciting to see what they release next. You may not love everything on the label, but there's something for everybody to love.

Some may love to scan the radio dials and look for something 'new' to listen to. Others may want to read **Rolling Stone** or **Pitchfork** to stay on top of the latest musical trends. Me? I just love to hear as much as possible in any way that I can. And yes, I am very blessed to be able to listen to a lot of different things each week, whether they are new artists or reissues. With that being said, Metal Mind is a label I'll always pay attention to. I don't like all of it, but I appreciate the fact that they exist and they are great at doing what they do. With each of their releases that I'm lucky to get a hold of, I listen and I learn.

Being a relative newcomer to their catalog, I was over the moon when they released a batch of 2CD sets that contained a pair of albums by some of Poland's greatest Prog Rock artists: **SBB, Collage, Satellite** and **Believe**. These 2CD sets are reasonably... no, make that incredibly... priced and should be snapped up by anyone wishing to expand their musical horizons, Prog Rock or otherwise.

COLLAGE

For anyone into the '80s and '90s Prog Rock scene, **Collage** were one of the best of the best. Like a mixture of both Fish and Hogarth eras of Marillion, Collage's sound mixes the lush and moving sounds of classic '70s bands with clean, well-produced modern Prog shine while tossing in loads of stunning melodic hooks. With great vocals and musicianship, Collage sound just as wonderful today as these nearly 20 year old recordings sounded when first released. My current favorite is the **Moonshine** album, which contains many 'wow' moments. Metal Mind has released two different double CD sets, both of which are pretty amazing: **Changes/Moonshine** and **Basnie/Safe**.

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