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9.4/10 Ignacio

### **TIME OF ORCHIDS - Namesake Caution - CD - Cuneiform Records - 2007**

review by: **Ignacio Coluccio**

Listening to Time of Orchids is just like listening to Russian (or insert your favorite hard language here) people talk: you know they are talking, and you know they understand each other, but you don't have any idea of what they're saying until you care enough to start either learning or paying a whole lot of attention to it. Now, the whole idea can be either entertaining, appealing, or just awful, depending on the situation.

Well, Time of Orchids is the best kind of what-the-hell-are-they-saying possible, the one you can enjoy even without understanding everything, and that after some time, you'll start getting it. And that's where magic happens and *Namesake Caution* turns from a good disorientating album into a, great, original, atmospheric, avant-garde rock album.

It's not really a matter of just understanding, though, Time of Orchids is great because it's both aesthetically pleasing and conceptually advanced (maybe even too advanced of unseasoned listeners), so even if you hate it, it's worth your time. The songs, actually more worthy of the "composition" title, are perfect examples of non-linear development with most time signatures and rhythms being 110% weird, and those melodies... well, maybe 200%.

Weird and all, the most surprising thing is that they don't really use any instrument that rock bands don't normally use. Guitars, drums, bass, harmonized vocals and synth, pretty much, but nothing like gamelan or shamisen.

Even the way the instruments are used is a typical rock one: drums for the rhythm, guitar for rhythm and melodies, etc... But it's not a typical rock band because their songs are not typical rock songs. They don't use any melody cliches, and it all sounds like the creation of a genius madman with a talent for music more than just guys kidding around with their instruments.

In what it is, we could safely say that *Namesake Caution* is a damn near perfect record. Especially for fans of Magma, Koenjihyakkei or more adventurous modern Zeuhl like Ruins, even if it doesn't sound much like them, but it's a similar kind of brain explosion-inducing composition. (9.4/10)

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