

NICK BARRETT/CLIVE NOLAN: *A Rush of Adrenaline*

2005 (DVD, 120:00); Metal Mind Prod./MVD DR-4485

Style: Acoustic progressive rock

Sound: ★★1/2 Visuals: ★★1/2 Content: ★★1/2

Performance: ★★★★★ Total rating: 13 1/2

Childhood friends Nick Barrett (guitar/vocals) and Clive Nolan (keyboards/vocals) decided to perform some shows as an acoustic duo in 2005, including this outstanding performance comprising *A Rush of Adrenaline*, filmed in Katowice, Poland. Unfortunately, the audience is subdued and seems unfamiliar with the music Barrett and Nolan have created the last 20 years with their primary bands, Pendragon and Arena, respectively.

Resembling a latter-day version of Yes mates Jon Anderson and Rick Wakeman, this duo renders many of the songs in this 15-song, 85-minute set with dramatically different (though still complex) arrangements. We also get to see a playful side to these musicians seldom revealed elsewhere. The music obviously sounds lighter. And while the duo's attempts at drinking-related humor falter with the staid audience, Barrett and Nolan appear to enjoy themselves immensely.

A 31-minute interview reveals that the pair approached this laid-back project with a sense of irony – hence, the DVD's title and the old-man-racing-motocross cover art. Irony or not, these two musicians prove that progressive music can be light and whimsical. — Michael Popke

THE GATHERING: *A Sound Relief*

2005 (2DVD, 178:00); Psychonaut Records/The End TE062

Style: Atmospheric rock/metal

Sound: ★★★★★ Visuals: ★★1/2 Content: ★★★★★

Performance: ★★1/2 Total rating: 13

Bands *can* age gracefully. For proof, watch *A Sound Relief*, The Gathering's first official independent concert DVD, a performance recorded in Amsterdam in May, 2005. Drawing

heavily from recent experimental and atmospheric albums rather than reaching back to the band's early goth-metal and death-metal sound, the 79-minute set is a relaxed, mesmerizing affair. Just don't expect to hear "Strange Machines," the closest The Gathering ever came to a major hit in 17 years.

Vocalist Anneke van Giersbergen, who paved the way for a slew of bands fronted by female singers, is the focal point of this gig. She gives a passionate performance that finds her swaying and dancing to music that typically wouldn't induce swaying or dancing. Great camera work skillfully embraces her performance, as well as those of The Gathering's solid quartet of musicians, including new female bassist Marjolein Kooijman.

Bonus features include an endearing film documenting The Gathering's 2004 tours, some taken when van Giersbergen was pregnant. Notably absent: obnoxious band shenanigans, cuss words and just plain stupid behavior. — Michael Popke

LANA LANE: *10th Anniversary Concert*

2006 (DVD, 162:00); Frontiers Records FRDVD 011

Style: Symphonic progressive rock/metal

Sound: ★★★★★ Visuals: ★★ Content: ★★1/2

Performance: ★★1/2 Total rating: 12

It's a shame that Lana Lane and her shiny, mystical brand of American, keyboards-based symphonic rock must rely on Japanese audiences for a solid fan base. But at least *10th Anniversary Concert*, recorded in 2005 in Tokyo, is an improvement over Lane's last live-in-Japan release, 2003's *Return to Japan*.

10th Anniversary Concert comes with a single-disc companion CD and draws selections from all of Lane's studio albums (including songs never performed live), and features the band from 2005's *Lady MacBeth* album. But unlike the *Return to Japan* DVD, all players are shown onstage. Lane's husband/producer Erik Norlander used in-the-studio footage of guitarist Peer

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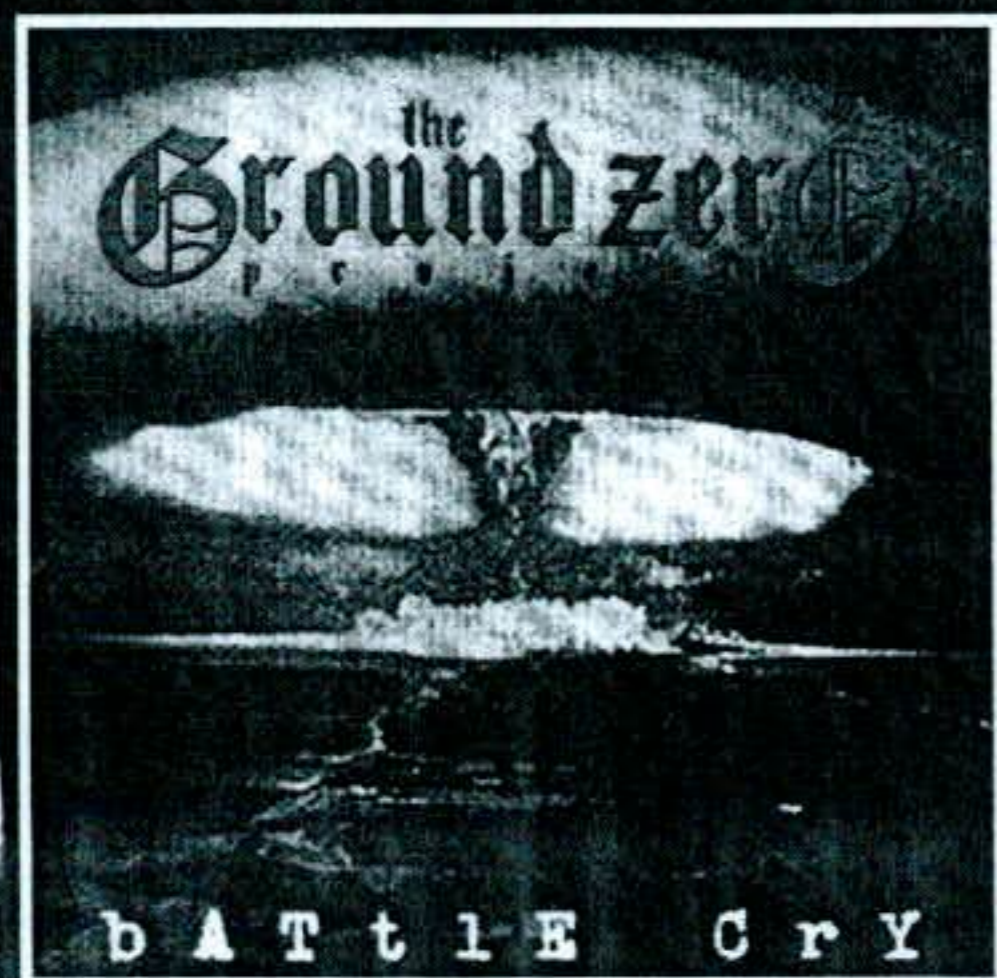
THE GROUND ZERO PROJECT

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David Taylor of *Virtuosity* says: "The debut CD from California's **The Ground Zero Project**, *Battle Cry* is quite a pleasant surprise. The music should please even the pickiest prog-heads out there, especially those that like heavy odd-time signature keyboard-led tunes infused with deep spiritual themes in the lyrics. The music begs to be cranked up loud on your home stereo."

Javier Elizondo of *ProgFreaks.com* says of **The Ground Zero Project**: "This band serves up a cocktail of 70's prog rock, with a mixture of heavy riffs and powerful melodies along with deep Christian concepts and lyrics" / "A great bet, especially for all of you symphonic rock fans out there"



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