

Madcap's Flaming Duty

Tangerine Dream

Eastgate, 2007

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The Tangerine Dream turns 40.

Edgar Froese formed the Tangerine Dream in 1967 as a cutting-edge experimental band featuring a unique line up of three synthesizers plus drums. Their early experiments with electronic music were inventive and influential, and were one of the first groups to use lasers and projected images during their live performances.

Time and technology gradually caught up with the Tangerine Dream, diminishing their uniqueness and commercial appeal. During the 1980s they skirted perilously close to a new age sound. The 90s found the Tangerine Dream melding keyboard and computer sounds but proved to be mechanical and boring.

Given their history, *Madcap's Flaming Duty*

is a remarkable comeback album and a revelation. Froese tones down the keyboards and virtually eliminates the computers. Drums, vocals on all the songs, bass, guitars and other assorted instruments flush out the sound and give the Tangerine Dream a true group feel.

The genius of *Madcap's Flaming Duty*

is in the lyrics. Eleven of the 12 songs take their lyrics from poems and literary figures. What other band could take the words of Walt Whitman, William Blake, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sir Philip Sidney and more and incorporate them into rock song structures and make it work?

Chris Hausl is the vocalist on all tracks. He has a stunning Steve Perry-type voice and, when he opens his mouth, he dominates the songs. Linda Spa has been a sometime member of the Tangerine Dream for almost 20 years; the flautist is one of the best in the world and provides a welcome counterpoint to the keyboards.

The first song sets the tone for *Madcap's Flaming Duty*.

"Astrophel and Stella" weave the vocals in and out of the keyboard sounds. "A Dream Of Death" finds Spa's flute dancing around the keyboards rhythms, broken up nicely by a guitar solo. There is more of the same in "Hear The Voice."

"One Hour Of Madness" find the keyboards building on the guitar riffs until they meld into one. "Solution To All Problems" contains some brilliant mechanical percussion and vocals that challenge the subtle keyboard rhythms, and "Lake Of Pontchartrain" is a traditional Irish folk song that has a wonderful upbeat feel. Acoustic mandolin and vocals leave you wanting more.

Madcap's Flaming Duty

is a wonderful and brilliant comeback album by a group that has persevered in obscurity for many years. One can only hope that Froese's vision for the Tangerine Dream will continue in this direction.

Rating: [A](#)

User Rating: Not Yet Rated

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