



MSG

In The Midst Of Beauty (Inacustik Records)

Michael Schenker makes yet another comeback after single handedly dismantling one of the best bands that he had put together, that being the band that toured behind the *Arachnophobiac* and *Beware Of Scorpions* records. Fresh off his latest meltdown Schenker bounced back and enlisted the services of former MSG singer Gary Barden for the album that would become *In The Midst Of Beauty*, but it wasn't enough to just have just one first class musician on board, oh no. Schenker pulled out his rolodex and called up keyboardist Don Airey who previously played with Coverdale in Whitesnake and recently landed the role of Jon Lord in Deep Purple, also heeding the call is bassist Neil Murray also of Whitesnake fame and rounding out the group is Simon Phillips who is known for his stellar drumming in Toto.

On paper it's a fan's dream team, high caliber players that sound tight together but in the end the result is fairly good. The Schenker signature sound and leads are there but songs aren't as dazzling as you hoped for. *In The Midst Of Beauty* it doesn't hold up to previous Barden/Schenker collaborations, but then again you can't capture that first experience again...ever. "Night To Remember" sounds like a solid leftover Deep Purple track; great guitar groove with organ pumping in the background, "End Of The Line," and "The One" showcase vintage Schenker riffs which are the basis of each track, "Summerdays" is a great example of the Schenker/Barden chemistry of old. "Come Closer" is a great three minute rocker that has classic rock radio staple all over it. *In The Midst Of Beauty* turned out to be a good MSG album; hopefully this is indeed Schenker's first step in his climb back from his self-induced hell. I'm pulling for the Mad Axe Man.

Ruben Mosqueda

Select Discography

In The Midst Of Beauty (2008)

Heavy Hitters (2005) ***

Be Aware Of Scorpions (2002) ***

The Unforgiven (1999) ***

M.S.G (1992) ****

Save Yourself (1989) ****

Perfect Timing (1987) ****

Assault Attack (1982) ***

The Michael Schenker Group (1979) ***

Lovedrive (1979) *

Strangers In The Night (1979) **

Lights Out (1977) **

No Heavy Petting (1976) **

Phenomenon (1974) **

Lonesome Crow (1972) *

* as a member of Scorpions

** as a member of UFO

*** as a member of The Michael Schenker Group

**** as a member of McAuley Schenker Group

michaelschenkerhimself.com