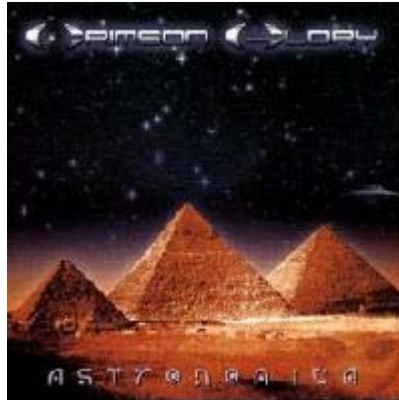




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Crimson Glory

Astronomica (reissue)

Metal Mind/Roadrunner Records

[www.metalmind.com.pl](http://www.metalmind.com.pl)

The year was 1999. Metal music was just starting to get noticed again after a massive lull in both sales and interest in the genre. Just as the tide turned one of the most talented and largely unrecognized acts in progressive metal history returned with a massive sounding slab of progressive heavy metal. Not hard rock, not lite metal, not radio rock, but strong, musical, and aggressive metal. Crimson Glory's reunion for the Astronomica album was nothing short of amazing but would again go largely unrecognized. Metal Mind Productions has reissued this album however to remind us all that Crimson Glory's return was...well...glorious to put it bluntly!

After the disastrous reaction to the Strange and Beautiful album the band laid low for nearly eight years. According to the liner notes the band awaited the return of vocalist Midnight but he was "not interested in making a new album." With the return of founding member Ben Jackson however the band decided to launch themselves into the foray of modern music with new vocalist Wade Black, a pure and refined metal vocalist if there ever was one. Black proved to be well schooled in the work of Rob Halford and King Diamond which added a heavier and more intense dimension to the bands progressive sound (which they brilliantly returned to for this album).

As far as I'm concerned, if you are going to by a Crimson Glory album than their debut and Astronomica are the best way to spend your money. This album is full of great songwriting and super intense delivery. The laid back emotive vocals of Midnight are replaced with a powerful scream that literally chills your spine on songs like "New World Machine" (which also features one of my favorite bass lines ever), "Cyber-Christ," and "Lucifer's Hammer." Even the obligatory ballad, aptly titled "The Other Side of Midnight," is a winner here. This album plays beautifully from start to finish and sounds as true today as it did nearly eight years ago.

Recently Crimson Glory have reunited yet again and while plotting a new album vocalist Midnight, again, departed. While most Crimson Glory fans probably took that that hard and while it probably hurt the new reunion's marketability a bit, the band decided to push forward welcoming Wade Black back into the fold. Black fronting Crimson Glory gives them the heavy edge their early albums lacked. A follow up to Astronomica is building and, mark my words, it will be the best thing Crimson Glory have ever released. Fans that missed out on this the first time around need to check it out and longtime fans who rejected it need to get a clue.

Reviewed by: **Mark Fisher**

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