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Rogue Male - First Visit Re-issue (Metal Mind) Review by Metal Mark



These guys were part of the New Wave of British Heavy Metal movement and recorded two LPs and one EP. Yet their entire legacy seems to revolve quite a bit around the fact that Kerrang! magazine called them “the next big thing” and of course they failed to live up to that prediction. In fact that Kerrang! claim seems to be the only thing most people ever said about this band and I could never find a decent description of their sound over the years. Now the album has been re-issued and I can finally judge for myself. The sound here has a definite Motorhead influence primarily from the Overkill/Bomber era plus there are several songs with a strong Judas Priest sound say from around the 1979-1981 period. The

vocals are gritty and deep and the music is heavier than I would have figured, but fairly basic. The melodies make this almost as much a hard rock effort as it is a metal album, but the two styles work together well enough. This is very much a NWOBHM sound although for 1985 it’s a little dated because by that time I think most were moving beyond this approach. I enjoyed every song and this version includes two bonus tracks. My curiosity of this band had grown over the years largely due to the fact that no one would commit to saying much about them. The results are that it’s better than I figured it would be. However I can see why they didn’t make much of an impact, if this had come out in say 1982 instead of 1985 then I could have better understood someone thinking this band might make an impact. Another fine Metal Mind re-issue which includes bonus tracks and the booklet has pictures and a band biography.

Rogue Male - Animal Man Re-issue (Metal Mind) Review by Metal Mark



After “First Visit” this band did a U.S. tour to support the album, but they didn’t make the impression they were hoping for. They returned to the UK and put out an EP called “Belfast”. Then following some shifting of drummers they put together their second LP “Animal Man”. They may have looked like a cross between the cast of “Cats” and extras from a Mad Max film, but their debut had proven they could put forth a solid release. So I don’t know what exactly happened here, but this is a rather confused sounding album. “First Visit” had a very cohesive sound and a definite, if slightly dated musical direction. This album not only fails to pick up on that direction, but it also doesn’t seem to follow any

real apparent direction that I could comprehend. There are several tracks that sound like they would have been very comfortable on the debut. However, there are also songs where the music lacks not just power, but also much of any identity. Several tracks rely on a more processed drum sound and the guitars are pushed into the background far more than they needed to be. The vocals also suffer as a few songs hear some kind of pop approach that just sounds completely misguided because they are not even focused enough to work as pop music. If this band wanted to change their style then they needed to go at it with confidence and do it completely. Instead this album is such a mixed bag that it reminds me more of an album of outtakes and previously unreleased material. I don’t know if the band were upset by the lack of

success at this point, if outside hands messed with their style or if their numerous line-up changes had finally taken their toll. Whatever the reason this album suffered and I guess that Rogue Male suffered as well because they broke not too long after this album. Metal Mind's re-issue includes a bonus track and the booklet has lyrics and a band biography.