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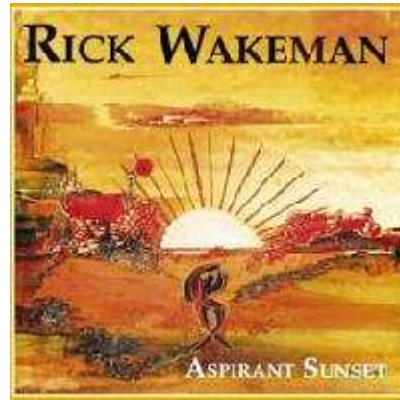
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Editorial



Rick Wakeman

Aspirant Sunshadows & Aspirant Sunsets (available separately only)

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Originally released in 1991, MVD Audio is making available again two-thirds of the Aspirant trilogy (sometimes also referred to as the Sun Trilogy). “Aspirant Sunshadows” and “Aspirant Sunsets” are discs two and three respectively in the series. Those familiar with Mr. Wakeman’s work with progressive rock legends Yes or are familiar with his numerous solo albums and film scores may be expecting intricate works that display his mastery of keyboards but that is simply not the case here. These albums are New Age in nature and are entirely about creating a relaxing atmosphere as opposed to the hype and grandeur of the majority of his work.

“Aspirant Sunshadows” opens ever so gently with “The Nightwind,” which is one of Wakeman’s most powerful and overlooked pieces. The album’s tone is set brilliantly by it and the soft caress carries throughout the albums entirety. Other highlights include the Eastern flare of “Mount Fuji By Night” and the soft spoken but commanding “Shadowlove.”

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“Aspirant Sunset” is the dreamier of the two works included here. The album feels like a quiet evening aside the ocean. The kind of evening that reminds you of how small you actually are when compared to our magnificent Earth. “Floating Clouds,” “The Sleeping Village,” and “Dying Embers” are all wonderful works that create a structure for the album that “Aspirant Sunshadows” more or less lacks. “Floating Clouds” reminds me of the Christian song “Give Thanks” for some reason and the association makes the album that much more peaceful in my mind to be honest.

Bottom Line: I think that many Rick Wakeman and Yes fans will not enjoy these at all. These are albums that must be taken on their own and they stand on their own very well I might add. These are wonderful albums to simply relax, study, or fall asleep by.

Key Tracks: All of Them

Reviewed by: **Mark Fisher**

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