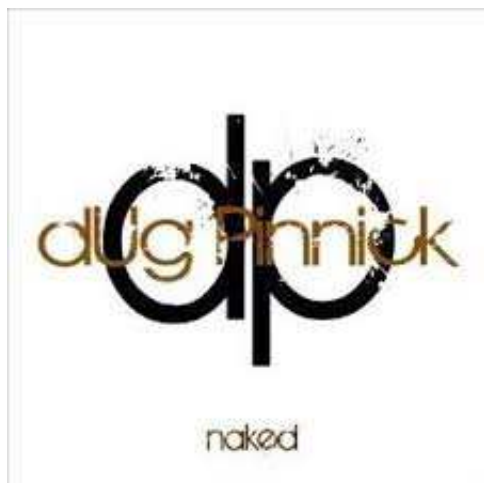


Hard Rock

May 29, 2013

dUg Pinnick – “Naked”



Music Overview

Artist: dUg Pinnick

Review Type: Album

Genre: Hard Rock

Rating:

3.5 / 5 - Good

Reviewed by: Peter Lindblad

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Review

Going into deep self-analysis, **dUg Pinnick**, the heart and soul of **King's X**, takes stock of his life on *Naked*, his latest solo album. A record with such a title would imply that its author is willing to leave himself vulnerable, exposed, and his defenses are down on *Naked*. Laying his soul bare, Pinnick has penned some of the most relatable and intensely therapeutic lyrics of his career, and they are couched in angry music that seems born of dark days, indeed.

Slaying those inner demons, an edgy Pinnick – who wrote everything on *Naked*, played everything on *Naked*, recorded it himself and produced it all by his lonesome at his own dUgtone Studio – unleashes gnarly heavy-metal storms like “That Great Big Thing,” the bruised, yet mellifluous, “I Hope I Don’t Lose My Mind,” and the ponderous, grunge-like stomp of “What You Gonna Do” that release powerful, bottled-up emotions. These are somewhat depressing, suffocating sonic environments – dreary motel rooms, where bottles of pills and booze are strewn about, but there’s a Bible on the nightstand and hope for a better life cutting through the gloom of the drug-sick psychedelia of “The Point,” one of the strangest tracks on *Naked*.

And there are some odd passages on *Naked*, including the stuttering “Take Me Away From You,” with its ill-conceived proggy keyboards providing a distracting kaleidoscopic background, and the shambolic breakdown of “I’m Not Going to Freak Out.” More soulful, with a thick guitar roar, “Courage” growls at and then mauls to death whatever fears it confronts, while “Ain’t That the Truth” rolls out satisfying, hard funk grooves and the urgent “Heart Attack” tears the newspaper off the windows, letting in some radiant guitar light, optimism and the will to carry on.

Possibly the most affecting track on *Naked* is “If You Fuk Up,” a heartfelt, slow-building ode to self-reliance in the face of crushing doubt and despair that artfully weaves together different voice threads that carry Pinnick’s pleas for salvation and his own semi-formed survival plan. Less reliant on the Beatlesque harmonies and melodic ingenuity of King’s X’s greatest achievements, although not so different from their early works, *Naked* is spiritual in its own way, although it has a tough skin. It’s a 12-step program, a desperate rehabilitation facility and a crumbling old church in a bad neighborhood with an idealistic priest who tries valiantly to shepherd his flock, despite the temptations and hardships its congregation faces every day. Pinnick will clothe himself and fight on, carrying his burdens and seeking redemption wherever he can find it. Maybe *Naked* will convince others to do the same.