

## John Lodge

10,000 Light Years Ago



Esoteric Antenna EANTCD1049  
(CD / LP)

### Solo Moody misses the mark

So what do we expect from The Moody Blues' bassist's second solo album? His first was 37 years ago, so he should have more than enough material to choose from. But that debut, *Natural Avenue*, wasn't rated a classic, so...

The good news is that Lodge has recruited former colleagues Ray Thomas and Mike Pinder to accompany him on one song, *Simply Magic*. There's the odd curveball such as the jazz-violin-propelled *Love Passed Me By*, while guitarist Chris Spedding is prominent on *Crazy*, a decent uptempo rocker. The obligatory nostalgia number, *Those Days In Birmingham*, looks back 50 years, while *Lose Your Love* channels Lennon rather derivatively.

*Natural Avenue* was successfully reissued last year, and this presumably persuaded Lodge and his label to turn out another long-player. Yet albums such as this could not alone have sustained such a lengthy career. While inoffensive to the ear, *10,000 Light Years Ago* – light on time, at just half an hour – lacks the

creative spark John enjoys with Justin Hayward. A final reboot of the Moodies' recording career, with Thomas and Pinder involved alongside the key duo, is what fans crave – and how many bands have their "classic" line-up still alive to contemplate such a thing? Meanwhile, the continuing live Moody Blues gigs probably remain Lodge's focus... *Joseph Adair*