



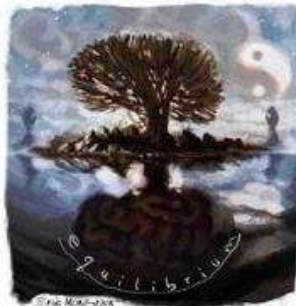
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Erik Mongrain

Equilibrium

Review by Josh Turner

This is neither the intersecting points between supply and demand curves or that Matrix knockoff starting Christian Bale. Rather, it's a solo effort from a Canadian musician named Erik Mongrain. The album is strictly instrumental and in case you're wondering; his specialty is the acoustic guitar. His brother, Yan Mongrain, is a different sort of artist. He's responsible for the water color on the paper canvas that accompanies the media.



To make it less folksy, he's commissioned a courageous unit. This consists of a fearless fretless bass that's ready to recoil from Michael Manring's holster. Alternatively, Bill Plumber focuses his synthesizer as if it were the precision scope on a sniper's rifle.

Apart from his deputies, there is another silent partner in his security detail. A nameless heavy sparingly handles snare drums. Well, that person is unnamed because it is Erik Mongrain himself who so pretty talented in how he rhythmically slaps the body of his instrument to sound like percussion.

Track by Track Review

A Ripple Effect

The album starts with pebbles in the pond as this song is mostly a slew of plucked strings. It's "Oh Brother Where Art Thou?" as if it were composed by California Guitar Trio. Still, there is no stampede of harmonics or chords. So even if CGT were the responsible posse, it would only played by a single maestro from their rough and tumble gang.

Alone In The Mist

Mongrain takes a mellower approach and slows the pace while the bass moans with heartache. Being overly optimistic, the shrill device tries to cheer it up. When the guttural utensil barks back, the more buoyant of the two becomes a mute.

Equilibrium

We're not quite halfway but it's surely the center of gravity. Shrouded by a protective layer of percussion, the cut has confidence and grace; progressing without reservation. Due to the swarthisness of this swathe song, the album balances on this fulcrum.

Muse

Comprehensiveness would be unnecessary to describe this piece. It's simply broad strokes and whole notes interlaced with meticulous pointillism. That's another story if you're unfamiliar with the different styles of painting.

The Silent Fool

This track is just as forward and self-assured as the others, so it's hard to say how it got the meek name. Then again, it could be safely classified as tame.

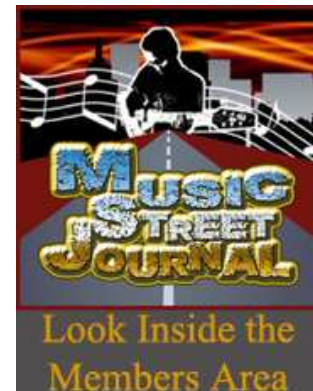
Pandora's Box

Unlike its predecessor, the label on the placard is dead on. When you step into this trap, you're met by randomly toothy stilettos at close range. It's best described as a feistier version of the title track. Inline with Mongrain's methodologies elsewhere in this list, he takes stride in order to give this scaly onslaught tempered cardio. The lethality is in its subtleness and not it's frontal attack.

Eon's Illusion

Mongrain hardly toils here. As the temperature promptly drops and the horizon starts to engulf twilight, there is a tremendous cooling effect. It doesn't take eons for the atmosphere to undergo this imperturbable osmosis. To be honest, the ails of his earlier labors evaporate in no time flat. It might be

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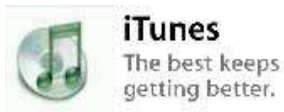
anticlimactic but it's as relaxing as a bubble bath with copious amounts of sea salts.

Raindigger

This procrastinated timeslot makes a lot of sense to me since it's ideal for a rainy day. The pattern featured in this piece is comparable to the pitter-patters skipping off the rooftop.

Maelström

It's a short album that's slightly above 40 minutes. We experience a wrinkle in time and make it expeditiously to the end. While you might expect a tempest, the last of Mongrain's litanies is akin to the eye of the storm. In other words, the song is calm but a wise sailor anticipates the unbridled gale that'll ensue our rendezvous with this rogue wave.



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