



## **Pendragon - The History: 1984-2000**

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An eminently listenable dozen tunes from {Pendragon} with a six page booklet enclosed in a gorgeous fold-out CD box, {The History: 1984-2000} is a wonderful introduction to this storied ensemble for the uninitiated. Not to be confused with the 1999 release {Overture, 1984-1996}, though some of the tracks do overlap - original versions of {"The Voyager"} and {"Total Recall"} are on both CDs while {The History: 1984-2000} contains acoustic versions of {"Paintbox"} and {"The King Of The Castle"} specially recorded for this compilation. Where {Overture, 1984-1996} contained a live version of {"The Black Knight"} with the original utilized here only completists need seek out both versions. But what {The History: 1984-2000} reveals is that this "Prog Rock" band is actually more Folk Progressive.

Yes, the aura and sometimes ostentatious style that characterizes bands like {Genesis} and {E.L.P.} is certainly noticeable, but more so is the stylish guitars and almost adult contemporary approach. The music is more enticing than {Carl Palmer} blasting audiences out of their seats with his fine music played at "11" - arena volume for 450 seat theaters.

{Pendragon} can easily waltz into those same venues and mesmerize with these wonderful slices from their past. The 9 tracks on the disc are augmented by a video of {"The Last Waltz"} from their DVD {Live...At Last}. Extensive liner notes from {Artur Chachlowski} work better if you enlarge them at a copy center - the type is quite tiny, but the booklet is fine nonetheless. Where {Ian Anderson} dips into a variety of bags and is multi-dimensional (especially on his orchestrated live shows), {Pendragon} stay the course with their mix of {Yes} meets {Aztec Two Step}, and that's quite alright.

- Joe Viglione