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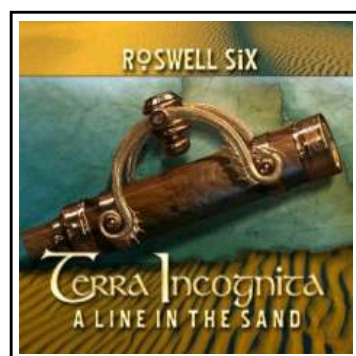
REVIEW ARCHIVE

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ROSWELL SIX - review added 28th July 2010

Album Review: Terra Incognita: A Line In The Sand (2010)

For fans of: Prog Rock Operas... and rock operas



Last year the debut Roswell Six album came out, and I was rather impressed. Pulling off epic rock operas is not an easy thing to do, but the combination of Kevin J. Anderson and Rebecca Moestaed's words/inspiration, plus Erik Norlander, Lana Lane and more on the performance side produced once of the best I've heard in a long time.

A Line In The Sand sees a mostly different line-up from the first. Sadly the album suffers as a result.

The Terra Incognita albums take their basis from the novels in, amazingly, the Terra Incognita series. The first album tied in with first novel "The Edge of the World". A Line In The Sand gets its inspiration from the second book, "The Map of All Things". It's described as a grittier work, focusing on a fantastical generations-long war. Listening to the words throughout this album, the story is still interesting and cleverly compiled. The problem this time is that the interpretation and

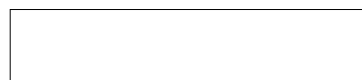
performance is a notch or two behind the debut.

One of the main culprits is Kansas vocalist Steve Walsh. He really is hit or miss these days. When he gets it right he is characterfully brilliant. When he doesn't he's as rough as a badger's sandpaper. On A Line In The Sand he swings both ways, so to speak. Some of the vocals he puts out are awesome. Some are frankly terrible. The inconsistency is a real downer and spoils the listening experience. Perhaps with a bit more money and time, and a lot more repeat-takes to get the vocals right, his stints here could have been amazing. Sadly they are totally hit and miss.

The compositions are unpredictable too. Sometimes it gels and sounds simply staggering. However, parts of the album sound hastily bundled together and just don't work. Shame. The musicianship is all good enough to not have fault, although little of it stands out as amazing.

Song wise, 'The Crown' is very ear-catching, although I'm not sure if that's in a good or bad way. The slow 'Loyalty' is a really good track and the best on the album by a long way. 'Need' is another good/bad/interesting entry.

Overall, I am disappointed with this. It really doesn't compare at all favourably to the first. There are flashes of genius throughout, and if you heard a 30 second clip it would be easy to be drawn in, but as a whole this is a badly flawed record.



Check out... 'Loyalty'.

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