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REVIEWS

Greg Rapaport - Homunculus (Splinterhead Productions) By: Joe Florez



Sometimes, I can find a true gem of a disc from a complete unknown. In this case it's Greg Rapaport. This is the axe slingers fourth venture into instrumental land. Is it the 80s all over again? Because I have been receiving plenty of these lately. Anyway, what drew me to review this latest offering is that when I opened up the booklet I saw a lot of different people on there with expressions and outfits. I had no idea what this was about so I read the bio sheet and looked up more info on the site. What we have here is eleven songs and individuals. Each one is supposed to represent a facet of personality. That means that each track will have its own identity. Well, let's forge ahead.

"The Sojourner (Confined)" is a very colorful piece that is nicely textured with aggressive and heavy guitar licks. Just as you are about to get comfortable with his vibe he quickly throws in some funky/jazzy riffs into the mix, but then soon exits the picture and goes back to throwing down. As we get further into the song you can tell that he eases up the mood just a tad with some sensitivity. I like this because it's not overly complicated and has for the most part a consistency that is easy to swallow, not to mention enjoyable. It does manage to get repetitive after a while, it could have been trimmed down just a tad and the experience would have been even more perfect. Synths are utilized here and everywhere else on the disc. Since he is a one man army, not only does he supply the bass lines, but also does the programming. Some might already say that they have heard this style/genre a million times over. I would too just based on this review, but you truly haven't. This is jam packed with surprises from start to finish. As we move along on the disc, you don't get the opportunity to hear a real solo until the fourth track "The Scapegoat (Revenge)." It is there that not only does Greg lay down a more intricate compositions, but when it's time to get down he shines. He shreds and plays furiously, but never gets obnoxious with it and it only lasts for a moment or two before getting back into his groove once again. "The Alchemist (Infernal) ventures off into progressive/jazz/fusion territory with results that are highly original. I must admit, I wasn't prepared for a journey quite like this. It was a unique experience that will need to be explored time and time again because there is a lot going on. There are some common musical threads that are found on each track, but like I mentioned earlier they all have their own identity. Greg has put a lot of time and effort into this which should pay off. He isn't a show boater because the disc isn't loaded with million mile an hour shreds or over the top technical writing skills. In other words, it's not robotic or blueprint sounding. He has feeling and passion and it shows on every track. They were all crafted with care. For a one man gang, Mr. Rapaport did a good job on performing, recording, mixing and mastering. However, I would like to see him focus more on just one instrument and have some other folks join the ranks. Also, he should get a producer for the simple fact that he can guide him and tell him what should stay and go. When you do this by yourself, you can get carried away and leave everything, which would make all of your songs long and eventually get tedious. There is nothing wrong with trimming some fat. Besides, sometimes you can knock the songs out of the ball pack by tightening up a bit. There is definitely something here for everyone on this self released disc. It's a fun ride to partake in and even cooler if you have your headphones on. You can get lost in the music rather quickly. Do yourself a favor and support this one.

me, plenty of golden nuggets here.

www.splinterhead.com | www.gregrapaport.com