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Manning Akoustik

by Jean-Philippe Haas

Just like Neal Morse or Roine Stolt, Guy Manning is one of the Stakhanovite prog', unable to pass one year without releasing a record. Some have left the Muses to rest a little, but the successor of *Margaret's Children* was scheduled for 2013, and former The Tangent had given a series of acoustic concerts: So what could be more logical than to fill the void with ... an album *unplugged* consists of reinterpretations of its own directory.

Our musician has swept almost all of his work, leaving the natural compositions too long and unsuitable for this treatment, choose only "songs" per se. "Acoustic" is a big word, however, because as stated himself the *boss*, the rule of the game was for the group to record only reproducible parts on stage, without any *overdubs*. Result: a lot of classical guitar, some keyboards, flute and a rhythm section discreet.

The folk instrumentation very fishy here and there to Canterbury, and even the most rustic side of Jethro Tull. Guy Manning's voice adapts easily to a kind much less emphatic than that usually practiced to such an extent that he almost suggest to persevere in this style. In a word, if one could question the appropriateness of the initial idea, we must face the facts that the album is more than just "fun", it also contains very successful adaptations as "A Place To Hide", "Silent Man" or "Castaways".

Akoustik timely and provides an opportunity for Manning, but also to fans to provide a little recreation after a continuous series of annual output - and unequal - since 1999.

Digestive pause which will also allow those who are not really fond of the man to rediscover it in a different light.