

HALLOWED

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Label: Frontiers Records

Three similar bands: Michael Thompson Band/Styx/Dennis DeYoung

Rating: HHHHHH (5/7)

Reviewer: Daniel Källmalm

“Centuries of yesterdays, nothing ever really changes - for a million names and faces. Circle turns and turns into, another day of déjà vu... as history repeats it’s pages” is it a quote on the records being released by Frontiers or AOR of today? It could have been but it is the chorus of the opening track of this album called History Repeats it’s Pages; a song about how man keeps repeating the same mistakes over and over, doomed to failure are mankind. But what about Soleil Moon, this is their second album from Larry King who we met earlier this year in the Michael Thompson Band release and the second guy of the duo John Blasucci who handles keyboard duties for Dennis DeYoung. Don’t those facts make it easy for you to know that these guys hail from the area around Chicago, it does to me. It was over a decade since last time they released something but what about this new release? is it another day of déjà vu, or is it something else?

It is not, musically it is a bit different from many of the AOR bands we usually meet from Frontiers as they involve many different styles, like Jazz, AOR, some theatrical stuff, some piano ballads and more; and their music is very album oriented not aimed for airtime on the radio and being easily accessible for the average joe. King was aiming to do something away from following trends and radio friendliness and I would say that he does as Soleil Moon’s music on this album cannot really be considered aimed at the wider audiences. I was not too impressed by King when singing for MTB but on this album he is absolutely brilliant, the production is amazing and the sound is absolutely fantastic. The album is well varied and with three bonus track the international release playing time is up from around 45 minutes to little over the hour.

I think that this is a great album, the songs are mainly excellent as is the performances and the sound which makes this album a great listen and the fact that it does not sound like most stuff that comes out of Frontiers, nothing bad about their releases but they do have many similar bands and albums in their roster. However, this album is clever, it has clever lyrics and clever song structures and albums that have all way through good lyrics are not that many in today’s musical world. It all begin with taking us down an amazing journey on the pages of history, a great opening track that sets the tone of the album with saying that it is strange that man

never learns from the pages of history, or something like that. Then we have some more positive notes in the second track talking about romantic interaction that in the third track leads to anticipation of a newborn. Then in the track called Goodnight Irene, that positive note changes to something a whole lot darker with the story of a father losing his child. That is the most beautiful and sad song I have ever heard, or at least heard in a very long time. It is just amazing in all regards that song and it is impossible not to get “something” in your eye when hearing it. The song that follows which is called Freedom is another great, clever and catchy song about a child running from hard times. Then we have Colorado and we have the bonus track Ohio which both are great as well but the last two bonus tracks could have been left out because they do nothing but add playing time to the album.

There is one slight issue for me with this album, it is too long and I have a really hard time seeing the point of having a lot of bonus tracks but dismissing the bonus tracks I think you have a perfect playing time for this album and that is how I think this album should have been released but in all honesty it is just a small issue and this album is really a great one.

This is one of the absolute best melodic rock albums released in 2012 and a highly recommended album for anyone who likes their music good and not only easily digested. In its best moments this album is just perfect, I recommend you to have a close look at this album.

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