

Review:

Camera Obscura | Steve Adams

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This is a guitar showcase for a valued versatile musician. His name is Steve Adams and he is from the Los Angeles area of California. He is a very tasty guitarist and can be flashy at times but he also has great taste and chooses his spots well to "show off". He knows he is a "virtuoso" but he's also got control of his ego to make some wonderful songs and add tension and dynamics to a genre where these things are lacking.

The all female rhythm section is excellent and adds wonderful support to Steve's tunes and ideas. The bass and some keys are played by Desha Dunnahoe. The drums/percussion are ably manned by Karen Teperberg. Steve Mattern play keys on track 5. Mary Dagoni plays flutes on track 7. Steve Adams plays electric and acoustic guitars, strings and mellotron as well as doing all the singing of which there are 3 songs with vocals.

All these songs are well written slightly commercial progressive rock with some influences from Camel circa Bardens and also some Steve Hackett and vocally to Eric Johnson. There are some orchestral samples used which were taken from the "Vienna symphonic library" as done by "Garritan Orchestral Strings" by Gary Garritan.

I think that track 5, "The Door Stays Open", is a very nice shuffle rock beat and wonderfully placed after the opening onslaught of the first 4 tunes. This has the added keys of Steve Mattern and works nicely. Track 7, "Jacuzzi" is the Hackett cover song from Defector and is done up real nice with the addition of some exquisite flute playing by Mary Dogoni. Very nice song and ethereal as well.

The song, "seven four" is a tribute/homage of sorts to Pete Bardens who Steve played with and toured before Pete's passing on. This tune has a nice driving beat with Steve's guitar playing doubled and singled melody lead lines, then quieting down for some articulate finger picking bits. Very nice loud and quiet parts that keep this song moving along at a nice clip with added synth solos as well. Extremely tasty and well done.

Over all this has just about all the right pieces in place for a very well done and tasteful piece of guitar prog rock. A minor point I wanted to mention is that Steve's guitar tone doesn't change much track to track as he favors the Ibanez-like and Mesa boogie tones. Second half of the CD the tones

do change. The vocal pieces are very well done and seem to be perfectly placed for a bit of a breather or respite.

So this is an excellent CD of wonderful tunes that vary and flow very well showing Steve's songwriting and arranging skills as well as his spot on playing.