

Review:

Vertigo | Steve Adams

HAIRLESS HEART

<http://www.hairlessheartherald.co.uk/adamsver.htm>

Guitarist Steve Adams' second solo outing, *Vertigo*, was originally released in 1999 but is re-released in February 2005. For this album, Steve is joined by Camel legend, Andy Ward on drums and percussion, with Desha Dunnahoe (keyboards, flute) and bassist Susan Lyster, enabling the man himself to concentrate solely on the guitar work.

Unlike his first solo album, *Maiden Voyage*, *Vertigo* is totally without vocals but interestingly opens with the track *Maiden Voyage II*, which is again based on the melody of the original but with a slightly more aggressive approach. *Maiden Voyage* was superb and *Maiden Voyage II* is equally brilliant. Adams' compositions and style of playing on *Vertigo* maintains the hint of Camel and Andy Latimer but his increased speed and aggressiveness of playing on the title track, *Vertigo* and *Wash The Watch* leans towards Satriani.

Tapped sees Adams let rip in a Satriani-meets-Hackett manner, with Ward and Lyster unobtrusively maintaining the rhythm (unlike a lot of drummers, Andy Ward invariably dons the cap of the orchestral musician rather than the soloist, enhancing rather than dominating the music). Nice flute section from Desha Dunnahoe too on this track and it would have been nice to hear a little more of her flautist skills. Steve's Camel influence is again highlighted in the track *Tales Of The Flying Cat* compositionally, with particular attention to the keyboard pieces expertly executed by Desha.

To top it all, Steve closes the album with his (1999) version of, arguably, one of the best prog tracks of all time - *Lunar Sea*. Needless to say, Andy Ward is in his element on this well known Camel masterpiece. Each time I listened to this version, I easily forgot that it was not actually Camel performing even though it is not a carbon copy of the original. The intensity and liveliness of the music remains intact and is a great tribute to both Camel and Peter Bardens.

Highly recommended.

Jem Jedrzejewski