

“AKOUSTIK” review by Jerry Lucky for ‘The Progressive Rock Files’

Manning – Akoustik (2012 Festival Music)

Taking time between more official band releases Guy Manning has chosen to deliver “unplugged” versions of the band’s earlier recordings done in acoustic fashion. There was only one directive with this project and that was that what was recorded had to be done live with no overdubs. So again these twelve tracks have that un-plugged feel even though I’m sure some of the keyboards were actually plugged in.

The selection of tunes, virtually all just over the four-minute mark take on a very different feel. It’s less about progressive rock or symphonic arrangements and more focusing on the song. Manning has always been gifted at writing great songs. Combined with his skill in the studio arranging those songs into more structured pieces he produces lovely proggy material. Here on this disc that’s gone and we’re listening instead to a collection of seemingly personal odes with a strongly folk influenced feel. Not that that’s bad, it just gives these familiar pieces a completely different feel, which is I think exactly what they were after.

If you are a fan, this will be an easy add to your collection and just might open up the door to some newcomers as well.

For more: www.guymanning.com