



## MANNING "AKOUSTIK #2" Review - ProgWereld

Well, after receiving moderate to reasonable "Akoustik" Guy Manning gives us, stoic as always, a treat under the name of (you guessed it already) "Akoustik # 2, with little difference of approach compared to its predecessor the way; a few small changes in occupancy and again mainly new arrangements of older songs, plus three new songs: *Yesterday's Hero*, *Moorland Skies* and *Saturday Picture Show* to see the light for the first time. Moody, understated songs that perfectly match the dark days before Christmas. *Moorland Skies* has a beautiful melody with appropriate musical interpretation by guitar, piano, Hammond sounds somewhat modest and subtle background vocals. No prog, obviously not I say then, but definitely a nice song. The same can be said of *Saturday Picture Show* that still spiced with the always warm sounds of flute.

Because the approach is much attention to the singing of Manning. Yes, I know this is not very appreciated by many, but I liked it before and think also actually the least disturbing. Does fit nice in the packages so again no problem.

With acoustic translation of existing songs Manning has not a "Johnny Leiden 'as made. The songs are translated respectful, very rich and full production of all this is fine. Sometimes it's a little more jazzy, sometimes folky and occasionally good catchy poppy. With a number of performances Manning would very favorably in a sober lit bar or pub where men armed with an alcoholic beverage ponder life. For the record; I mean positive.

Pace makes Manning on track nine: . *Icarus & Me One* - especially for this album - dynamic execution integrated with a dose familiar prog. Flute and keys riedelen yummy synchronously on the loose and inaction will be difficult for many genre purist. A nice boost, call it a 'cup-a-soupe'.

*Joshua Logan* is a nice swing and equipped with staccato piano plus a stubborn fiddle in the slalom paves the way, the attention is easy to maintain. Even with the subsequent *Ships* buy more of the same suit and is on acoustic versions that can extract much cozier than is often the case. No endless reverie but just very solid performances with a variety of styles that run tasteful.

The concluding *Winter* gives his melancholic disposition a film noir feel and rounds off the album as the eleven songs previously with the nostalgic *White Waters* began. Although the songs are mostly stripped of prog character I listened with pleasure and rising appreciation to "Akoustik # 2".

If you only want to hear something else but then again not too far from home, take a look at this album there. Do not lay it off after the first listen but give it a chance to grow.

As this is certainly not the least done Manning and a welcome addition to the man's discography.

**Govert Curl**