

Mp3 Amfibian - From The Ether



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Phish lyricist Tom Marshall and his band cater fifteen expectant songs on this cheerful Beatlesy album. Released in other 2004, this album has been eagerly embraced by Phish fans and normal populate alike. 15 MP3 Songs ROCK: Jam-band, ROCK: Classic Rock From The Ether Songs Details: This review was copied from phantasytourand was written by Dan Greenhaus in January 2004. (Tom Marshall is Phish's primary lyricist, that is why Phish is mentioned throughout the review.)

===== As I opened the package containing the new Amfibian album, From the Ether, I found myself genuinely excited. As of late, Tom Marshall's lyrics have found their way into slower, more "typical song-oriented" Phish tunes such as "Friday" (as opposed to, say, "Stash"). But when posed with the question some time ago as to why those seemed to be the predominant type of song to emerge from his writing sessions, Tom simply said that he wasn't sure why, and joked that "maybe the next one will bring ten Chalkdusts." So with a new lineup in place, and the prospect of 15 quality rocks songs on the album, I found myself with the album in my hands, and in the position to be pleasantly surprised yet again. To get started, one cannot even begin to discuss the new Amfibian album without mentioning the band's new lineup, which is significantly different than previous incarnations of the band. Notably, Anthony Krizan is on guitar, having done some time with Lenny Kravitz (no, he is not "the guy with the big hair"), and Chris Metaxas is on keys, guitar and vocals but most importantly, co-writer on a large majority of the songs. They are joined by Joe Larsen on drums and Bob Kay on bass but in the end, Tom Marshall is the centerpiece of the band, and his lyrics are the centerpiece of the album. The new lineup has made for an interesting album, one that spans the musical landscape. Tom's lyrics, not surprisingly, are as good as ever, which, working with the best musicians he's surrounded himself with, make From the Ether an album that fans are going to be thoroughly pleased

with. The ultimate compliment you can pay an album is to say you can listen to it all the way through, and you can certainly do that with From the Ether. It has a very easy and logical flow to it, suppressing the urge to skip any song, should such an urge exist. The ultimate compliment I personally can pay an album is to suggest that it makes me want to pick up my guitar immediately, learn the songs, and play them. And virtually all the songs on the album did that, most notably the opening track "Atlantis", and the upbeat rocker "Storm". But I would be remiss if I didn't point out that, as is the case with many albums, there are several songs that are closer to the "best of the lot". I mention this because, quite frankly, the "best of the lot" on From the Ether are really, really good songs. REALLY good songs. To listen to the album fully is to hear the influence of a variety of musicians on the band as a whole, influences which come through on many of the songs. "Isolate", the fifth song, is eerily Beatles-ish, emphasized by some very Beatles-ish orchestral and horn arrangements, just as the slower and more melodic "Sometimes" could be mistaken for Pink Floyd's "Pillow of Winds". "13 Days" could easily be mistaken for having Bob Geldof (lead actor in "The Wall") on lead vocals and "Storm", with its tight slide guitar work, sounds like the evil stepchild of Mike Gordon and The Allman Brothers after a night of tequila and bourbon. But, in the end, it is the familiarity and the feel of the lyrics, the Phishiness if you will, that shine through and appeal to the listener, highlighted by two songs in particular. Firstly, "Distortion", the album's 11th track and one of the best on the album, is going to be a concert staple, and immediately evokes thoughts of the Trey Anastasio Band, not only due to the presence of horns within the framework of a rock song, but because of the arrangements. The lyrics, about two people in a relationship that aren't on the same page, are also some of the best on the album. Secondly, "Mesmer", the album's 13th track and perhaps its best, contains equally first rate lyrics, and a middle section that cannot be described in any manner other than as a leftover from Phish's Rift era, with its jazzy, ascending piano work, and a rocking ending reminiscent of "My Friend, My Friend". The album is certainly not devoid of slower songs. Both "Reason" and "Enough" are in the style of an "Anything But Me", with the latter featuring a soaring outro guitar solo that is sure to thrive in the live setting. But it's those slow songs, along with the funk, the rock and the melodic that make this a complete album, and make it an album worth owning. 15 songs written by Tom Marshall? How could you go wrong? You can't. And Tom didn't.

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