

**All About Eve Jamtart AAEVPI
Fairy Lights Two - Live Acoustic**

A stripped down version of AAE featuring Julianne Regan on vocals with Andy Cousin and Marty Wilson-Piper on guitars did a number of acoustic live dates in 2000/2001, and this release is taken from them. To be honest it's not the sharpest recording in the world, and some tracks obviously work better in this format than others. 'Scarlet' works much better than 'The Mystery We Are', whilst 'Freeze' works better still as it has more depth with the inclusion of a bass line.

Not that this is a poor release in anyway, because some of the tracks are wonderful. 'Wild Hearted Woman' and 'Every Angel' are particularly outstanding, I think because they are performed with a little more passion than some of the other pieces are. There's a pretty good version of 'More Than The Blues' too. Elsewhere the trio seems to over depend on a jangly guitar sound fronted by Julianne Regan's often astonishing voice.

Having said that, this is still a fairly good album, and a welcome addition to the AAE canon.

Bernard Law

Millenium Reincarnations**Lynx Music LM07CD**

This is a very good melodic rock/ prog album by Polish band Millenium. At times they sound a little like a latter day Pink Floyd, especially on tracks like 'Reincarnation Part 1' and 'Gold Is In Your Mind', and even occasionally like CRS favourites Primitive Instinct, as on 'Light Your Cigar'.

Although the album is fairly steadily paced, there are some pretty good performances by the band. The vocalist Lukasz Galeziowski has excellent range, which shows up best on 'The King Of Broken Glass', which begins as a piano and vocal piece before building with keyboards and acoustic guitar. Actually, it is probably the keyboard work of Ryszard Kramarski that musically catches the ear, along with Piotr Pasko's tastefully restrained guitar. Tomasz Pasko and Piotr Mazurkiewicz form a pretty good rhythm section. The last track, 'The Casino Of Love', is more of an epic and proves to be interesting rather than outstanding.

All in all though this is a very interesting release, including some very tasty pieces, which is well worth checking out.

Bernard Law

Polish Art Rock Vol. 2**Lynx Music LM 06CD**

This compilation album features ten Polish progressive acts, including RSC, Ankh, Golem, Bordo, and Gargantua. Overall the music is more varied than you would expect, each having something distinctive to display. Ankh's piece has some very good atmospheric violin, whilst Golem's is much more jazz orientated. Zywioly's prominent use of clarinet gives them an altogether different feel, whilst Mediana include some very competent all round work. Gargantua are a much more

off beat band, Chimera gain their strength from a very well constructed piece, whereas H.D.R.M. take a much more noisy brooding approach. A good melodic rock piece with some clever long instrumental passages comes from Pawel Ziobrowski & Friends, while Bordo take a more atmospheric artful piece. RSC bring the album to a close with a melodic easy paced track that again includes some very good violin. Overall, this release works well because of the differences between the bands. I can only presume that the tracks chosen are representative of those bands work. If so, there's some interesting musical ideas floating around in Poland

Bernard Law

Christian Boule Non-fiction**Musea FGBG 4350AR**

Boule is a French guitarist who made some noteworthy collaborations with Steve Hillage in the Seventies. Indeed, that is quite apt, as this re-release from 1979 has quite a lot in common with Gong and Hillage's own work. It takes quite a varied approach, being a little funky at times, and a little cosmic elsewhere. To back this up Boule is noted for his glissando guitar work, and it comes across really well in this format. A dozen other musicians help Boule out, a notable inclusion being Tim Blake.

Boule does not make the mistake of over staying his welcome with anyone track, with most of them clocking in at around the four to five minute mark. However, one track, 'Viva Da New Sound' is around eleven minutes and works well as an extended piece where the music is allowed a little time to develop.

If you like a little "otherness" in your music, you could do far worse than this pretty interesting release.

Bernard Law

Antonio Valdes Y Su Marana**De Ojos Como Zarzas****Greatwinds GW 3108.AR**

This is a very impressive album by Valdes. Very much jazz-rock orientated, the rock is mixed with flamenco and gypsy influences making for quite an interesting brew!

Valdes himself plays saxophone and clarinet, and is joined on this release by Phillippe Troise from Eclat on guitars, and Lilian Bencini on double bass. One or two others help out too, including Pepe Linares on some vocals. Overall, the sound is not unlike that of Al Di Meola, or even jazz pianist Chick Corea, and evokes the best of seventies jazz-rock. On the vocal passages there is more than a passing resemblance to the Gypsy Kings too.

If you like smooth jazz-rock this one is for you. The first to say "Nice" can go to the back of the class though!

Bernard Law

Hajiro Haj 2000 CD

Hajiro are a heavy rock/metal band from France who actually sing in English. I suppose fair comparisons might be a touch of Bad Company and Zeppelin with a tad of The Stooges and MC5. The instrumentation is pretty sharp, and although the vocals are pretty good, in general they're a little too low in the mix and so become

lost in the overall sound.

When the band do hit form on a track though they are pretty impressive. 'Drunk' has some excellent interaction between the instruments, and for once the vocals of Nelson Zeppilli come across really well too. All in all, a very good heavy rock album.

Bernard Law

The Smoke**High In A Room - The Anthology****Castle Music CMEDD516**

The Smoke was a psychedelic mod band from Yorkshire who managed a little success in the Sixties. Their most notable single release was 'My Friend Jack' a song about taking acid that was banned by the BBC. It was, however a hit on the continent, and went to number 1 in Germany.

The first CD in this double release traces the band from their earliest days as The Shots (who were managed by the Kray Twins!), through to the prime days of Smoke. All in all, they were fairly typical of the pop-psychedelia of their day, and actually produced some OK music. Besides the afore mentioned 'My Friend Jack', two other tracks to catch the ear are 'Utterly Simple' and 'Sidney Gill'. The second CD is of seventies material as the break up of the band in 1968 left to some form of after life. To be honest it's no great shakes, and tends to be a lot more whimsical than the earlier material. Titles such as 'Old Feet, New Socks', 'Poor Little Frogs' and 'Sweet Wilfred - A Rodent Of Note' give the game away really. Both CD's include previously unreleased or alternative material. An OK release for Sixties lovers.

Bernard Law

Honeybus Castle Music CMEDD 533**She Flies Like A Bird - The Anthology**

You've got to feel for a band whose best song - 'I Can't Let Maggie Go' - will forever be associated with sliced white bread for slimmers! To be honest it's not that bad a song, and some of the others on this release, whilst not as good, are not too bad at all. Main man Pete Dello could write some decent material with a ear for catchy pop but with enough taste and know how to include arrangements for woodwind and string quartet. This release covers just about all their recorded material, including the 'Story' LP that now sells for more than £100 on vinyl. There's also seven tracks used originally as a BBC session, and some quirky later material from when Dello had left the group.

All in all, a collection of often haunting sixties pop rock.

Bernard Law

Woody Kern Castle Music CMEDD 496**The Awful Disclosures Of Maria Monk**

Apparently, with the revival of prog in the late 80's, this album became something of a collectors piece. I'm not quite sure why though! It's certainly not a bad release, although it disappeared without trace in early 1969 when it was initially released. It does sound dated, and doesn't break any new ground, but the musicianship is fine, and there are some subtle time