

Nazareth – The Fool Circle (1981)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 11 June 2010 21:03 - Last Updated Sunday, 02 September 2018 22:27

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01. *Dressed To Kill* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 3:31
02. *Another Year* (Charlton) - 3:28
03. *Moonlight Eyes* (McCafferty) - 3:33
04. *Pop The Silo* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 3:17
05. *Let Me Be Your Leader* (Charlton) - 3:49
06. *We Are The People* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 3:33
07. *Every Young Man's Dream* (Sweet) - 3:16
08. *Little Part Of You* (Charlton) - 3:28
09. *Cocaine (Live)* (Cale) - 4:35
10. *Victoria* (Sweet) - 3:18

Bonuses:

11. *Morning Dew (1981 version)* (Dobson/Rose) - 3:53
12. *Dressed To Kill (single edit)* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 3:45
13. *Pop The Silo (single edit)* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 3:16
14. *Let Me Be Your Leader (live)* (Charlton) - 4:16
15. *Dressed To Kill (live)* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 3:33
16. *Pop The Silo (live)* (McCafferty/Agnew) - 1:49
17. *Morgentau (German version of Morning Dew)* - 4:00

Personnel:

- Dan McCafferty - lead vocals
- Pete Agnew - vocals, bass
- Manny Charlton - guitars
- Darrell Sweet - drums, percussion
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- Jeffrey Baxter - synthesizer, vocoder
- John Locke - keyboards, water chimes
- Zal Cleminson - 12-string acoustic guitar on 09

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After effectively bridging the gap between hard rock and AOR sounds on *Malice in Wonderland*, Nazareth tips the scale in the wrong direction with this misguided followup. The biggest problem with *The Fool Circle* is the overbearing slickness of its production, which saps much of the energy from the proceeding by putting too heavy a focus on the pop elements of each song. For instance, tinkly piano sounds are allowed to overwhelm the guitar on the album's biggest single, "Dressed to Kill." The lyrics also suffer this time out because they strain to make political commentary and come off painfully heavy handed as a result; the obvious example is "Pop the Silo," a cautionary tale about nuclear warfare whose paranoid scenario is so exaggerated that it becomes unintentionally humorous. The group had lost guitarist Zal Cleminson by this time, and his loss is felt in the group's less-than-muscular delivery on this album (however, Cleminson appears briefly on a thrown-in live version of Eric Clapton classic "Cocaine," and the momentary shot of excitement it gives to this album only makes the remaining songs look even more lifeless by comparison). Despite all these problems, *The Fool Circle* isn't a complete loss: "Let Me Be Your Leader" combines some of the album's better politically-oriented lyrics with a sinuous reggae groove, and the aforementioned "Cocaine" successfully transforms that mid-tempo rocker into an acoustic-styled reggae. Just the same, *The Fool Circle* is one of the more disappointing albums in the group's catalog and can only be recommended to Nazareth completists. ---Donald A. Guarisco, AllMusic Review

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