

Tetragon - Stretch (1971)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 23 August 2011 17:03 - Last Updated Sunday, 03 February 2019 21:44

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01. *Snowstorm* (Hendrik Schaper/Jürgen Jaehner) - 7:50 02. *Listen Here* (Eddie Harris) - 10:59 03. *The Light* (Tetragon) - 9:10 04. *Hovering Stones* (Hendrik Schaper) - 6:20 [play](#)
05. *Dragon Song* (John McLaughlin) - 7:50

Personnel: - Hendrik Schaper - keyboards - Jürgen Jaehner - guitars - Rolf Rettberg - bass - Joachim Luhrmann – drums

On `Stretch', Tetragon play fusion-heavy killer instrumental rock, highlighted by endless aggressive Hammond organ and explosive red-hot electric guitar workouts. In the tradition of bands such as Finch, ELP, Santana band, or even a heavier version of Focus without as many classical influences, it's a very upbeat album full of scorching energy and positive vibes. The album gets better with every listen, so just make sure you play this one freaking loud to appreciate it even more - promise me!

Beginning with a mix of symphonic and heavy prog, `Snowstorm' has a very catchy and uptempo melody, overloaded with fiery Hammond organ and non-stop electric guitar rage! I particularly love the grinding guitar rhythm section, and although the track is quite repetitive, it's also very addictive and supremely groovy. Full of endless soloing, but the band never drifts far away from the main melody. In some ways this opener sets the template for the rest of the album. It sounds to me as if someone gave Focus a swift kick up the backside, booting their classical elements out of them but keeping their exciting instrumental power!

The stomping 11 minute blowout `Listen Here' is filled with competitive Hammond/guitar workouts, with a relentless foot tapping melody and a great driving rhythm. It's just keeps going and going, listen to that chugging bass and breakneck drumming! It's also notable for two fuzzy and murky attempts at bass solos! Endless wailing wah-wah guitar solos and a stunning shimmering organ solo in the second half. Best track on the album.

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More bluesy and laid back, `The Light' is probably the first spot on the album that allows the listener some room to come up for air. With a lovely guitar/organ melody (which reminds me a little bit of Canterbury band Egg) that is frequently reprised throughout the piece, it breaks up the racket and adrenaline of the first two tracks for something a little more reflective and emotional. Wait for the evocative guitar solo that reminds of the wonderful spiritual Santana band albums from the 70's, very tasteful. But the return of some nasty and dirty organ and guitar shreds in the second half is a nice touch too. Didn't think you were going to get off that easy, did you?!

`Hovering Stones' has some impossibly manic Emerson, Lake and Palmer-styled organ soloing. Chaotic drumming and funky wah-wah guitar attacks all around, and I especially love the maddening pummeling bass throughout the piece! Very unhinged, a totally ballistic track!

The finale `Dragon Song' has a nice plodding bass line, and although the track is a little more restrained and slow-burning than the previous one, it's still full of searing fusion-heavy guitar runs, with some tuneless and noisy Crimson like moments too. Perhaps by this point we're a little burnt out from the rest of the album, and while it doesn't really do much different from the tracks that preceded it, it's still full of outstanding musicianship from the four talented players.

Some listeners will find the repetitive structure of the arrangements extremely tedious and monotonous. Admittedly the band sometimes gets stuck in the same groove for minutes on end, but I tend to find it gives the album a hypnotic and addictive sound! There is such a cracking energy to the album and the band's performance, fans of noisy organ-driven heavy-prog like Atomic Rooster and Bodkin will find lots to enjoy here.

Full of powerful playing, `Stretch' is not a particularly deep or complex album, but offers hugely entertaining surface thrills! ---Aussie-Byrd-Brother, progarchives.com

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