

PBII: Plastic Soup



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Melodic/Progressive Rock

Rating: 4.5/5.0

ProgRock Records

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Review: Craig Hartranft, 06.07.2010

Dutch progressive rock band PBII is the successor to internationally known Plackband, sometimes known as the Dutch Genesis, which rose to fame in the 70's and 80's. The remaining ex-Plackband members Tom van der Meulen (d), Michel van Wasseem (lv,k) and Ronald Brautigam (g, bv) are joined by new bass player Harry den Hartog for their debut *Plastic Soup*. The album is named for the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, and PBII hopes to draw attention to this ecological problem through their lyrics. Musically, *Plastic Soup* finds PBII as progressive as their previous outing, with Brautigam's guitar work and Hartog's bass work shining throughout. Even, the early comparisons to Genesis can be found in certain guitar and synthesizer parts within *In the Arms of a Gemini* or *Fata Morgana*. Yet, longtime fans may find PBII to be heavier in parts, certainly noticeable in *Book of Changes*, *Loneliness*, *the Great Pacific Garbage Patch* and most certainly on the closing instrumental, *Cradle to Cradle*.

More often than not, these two elements, the rocky and progressive, are woven into a quilt of very melodic rock. *It's Your Life*, an ethereal and moving piece, and *Living by the Dice*, heavier song with some hard rock verve, show this blend quite well. PBII to be assisted by a few prog heavyweights including John Mitchell (Arena, It Bites, Frost), John Jowitt (IQ, Frost) and Heidi Jo Hines (daughter of Denny Laine of Wings). *Plastic Soup* finds PBII in fine form, an excellent and entertaining example of the best of European melodic progressive rock. Well recommended.