



Band: PB II

CD Title: "Plastic Soup"

Band Website: www.pb2.nl

Label: Independent

Release Date: 2010

If you've been around the prog world for any length of time you will have heard of the Dutch band Plackband who released a few CDs a few years back. Well three of the original members along with a new bass player have finished up a new CD entitled *Plastic Soup*. This being a kind of second incarnation for the band they've chosen the name **PBII** allowing for a linking to the past. The band is made up of Michel Van Wassem (keyboards, piano, vocals), Ronald Brautigam (guitars), Tom Van Der Meulen (drums) and the newest member Harry den Hartog (bass). Coming in for guest spots on different songs are Heidi Jo Hines (vocals), John Mitchell (guitar), John Jowitt (bass) and Charles Moore (voice tracks).

Plastic Soup consists of ten tracks, most of which are well over six or seven minutes that fall neatly into the symphonic prog category, but it also has a bit of a rockier edge, perhaps a little closer to something from Pallas with that trademark heavy edge but still grand and epic in scope. The CD kicks off with "Book of Changes" [8:34] a track written with three movements in mind starting off with some crunchy guitar crescendos and accents. There are multiple sections all pieced together very neatly as the song moves from tempo to tempo with some nice Mellotron styled choirs in the background. It's a classic prog track with ringing trebly bass and lush Mellotron strings providing a great transition about three-quarters of the way through to the compositions final movements and grand finish. Things get a little more direct with track two "In the Arms of a Gemini" [7:02] with it's driving bass and gravelly guitar riff repeating over and over all the while the keyboards provide the horn accents. The centerpiece of the disc is the four-part track five "The Great Pacific Garbage Patch" [12:49] with its ecological focus on how plastic trash is ruining our Oceans. Each part is preceded by spoken word passages which explain the depth of the pollution problem, while each song segment focuses on the appropriate mood and atmosphere. Each of the compositions on *Plastic Soup* manages to meander through multiple time and tempo changes with the expected changes in dynamics and arrangements making for a listening experience that is never boring.

I think this is a great come back for **PB II**. This is music that will certainly appeal to fans of bands such as IQ, Pallas and so on. It's a symphonic prog with a slight rockier edge although never overly heavy. The double-disc package I received included a second DVD disc with the whole album mixed in 5.1 as well as a couple nice live videos. For those appropriately motivated, the liner notes feature comments regarding what an individual can do to help regarding the pollution problem. As for the music itself, fans of this type of prog are sure to enjoy the music on *Plastic Soup*. Recommended.