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# Black Stone Cherry

## DISCUSS THEIR NEW ALBUM 'KENTUCKY'

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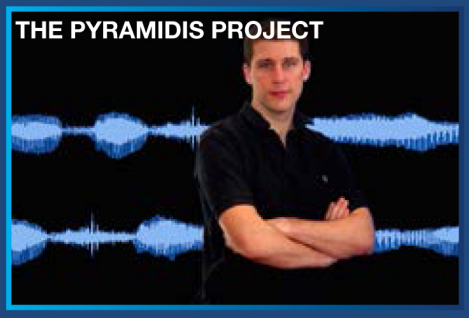


From Achenkirch, Austria, we find **THE PYRAMIDIS PROJECT,** an artsy prog/rock outfit who have a new CD out now called 'Emotional Distances'. The band are based around the multi talented Mario Buchinger, with additional musicianship bought in for each individual track. The Pyramidis Project is a network of musicians who stand for their conviction of authentic and real music. Each album from The Pyramidis Project is an overarching sound picture that tells a story. Mario calls the style 'Soundscaping'. The music can be compared with a painting, only the appearance is different: Colours are sounds; canvas is the recording media, eyes are ears; landscapes are soundscapes, which take the listeners to another acoustic dimension,

The first years Mario Buchinger grew up with his father's records by The Beatles or The Shadows. In parallel Mario followed the radio scene of the late 70's with the sounds of Rock and Disco. In late 1979 there was a German radio broadcast show called '100 minutes of Rock', where they introduced the brand new album 'The Wall' by Pink Floyd. "You can imagine how impressed I was. A four year old boy listening to this entirely new sound late in the night; the synthetic elements were something extraordinary and nothing I've ever heard before. This was the moment when music became one of the central parts of my life," says Mario.

Mario got inspired by many different acts within the past decades. Obviously, it is the sound of Pink Floyd and here especially the contributions of David Gilmour including his solo albums since the late seventies. But also musicians like Alan Parsons, Peter Gabriel, Mike Oldfield or even pure synthetic music acts like Jean Michel Jarre, Michael Cretu (Enigma) or Vangelis influenced Mario. "Concerning the sound and the production in the studio, it is mainly Alan Parsons whom I personally consider as one of the most guiding sound engineers in Rock music. For me the work in the studio is an essential part of musicality, definitely more than simply fixing music to a master. My inspiration is the wish to create a holistic concept album," he explains to me.

The golden thread is to fulfil high end music standards. "Even though it is a digital production, I focus on the recording quality. Excellent raw recordings are essential, effects are never used to compensate musical incapability (e.g. AutoTune or Melodyne), and some effects are applied as musical elements. I believe that the interaction of all contributors creates the unique sound of The Pyramidis Project," explains Mario.

'Emotional Distances' tells a story about an emotional voyage full of highs and lows. This second concept album of The Pyramidis Project is a new milestone for Mario. Compared to the first release 'Space And Emotion' the songs are catchier and more rock orientated although still experimental. An Austrian journalist said, 'it is hard to describe, you need to hear it'. The musical journey includes rock songs like 'Far From Home' or 'White Swan', synthetic tunes such as 'Treachery' and experimental sounds like in 'Crossing Bosporus'. The song named 'Far From Home' deals with the escape from the narrow-minded environment into the world following the slogan 'don't care what people say about me'. While 'Treachery' and 'Mistreated' stand for the emotional low points of the past years, 'White Swan' represents a rock guitar dominated declaration of love. "Oernskoeldsvik, a little town in the north of Sweden, is described by lounge sounds. One of my favourites is 'Crossing Bosporus', starting unconventionally with the safety instructions aboard the ferry from Istanbul to Bursa. This song combines European and Oriental influences and is characterized by striking guitar lines and synthetic sitar sounds," he explains.

The majority of the tracks were recorded in Pyramidis Audio sound studio in Achenkirch in the Austrian Alps, the home base of The Pyramidis Project. Only some parts were recorded in external studios, e.g. the saxophone part for 'Oernskoeldsvik' played by Loreno Buss which was recorded in Pomerode, Brazil. "Many ideas came up during travelling the world within the past years. The idea for the song 'Oernskoeldsvik' was developed in the same-named little Swedish town near the polar circle. The basic idea for the song 'Treachery' popped up during a flight to the US in 35,000 feet altitude in the south of Greenland. The song 'Mistreated' was formerly meant to be a love song but it turned out to be the opposite due to personal disappointing experiences," Mario explains. In total it took approximately eight years to complete the whole story of 'Emotional Distances' and it was entirely produced by Mario with great contributions by other musicians and lyrics by his wonderful wife, Marlene.

Many years ago Mario worked in the studio with a young Punk Rock band. "These guys were really powerful on stage. They made a great show and they transmitted a huge power to the audience. But in the studio they felt somehow uncertain. Their sound was far away from the strength they had on stage. It seemed to me that this studio session was lost. But after a while it turned out that my complaints provoked them. I started to insult them by complaining about their bad performance and I claimed that they are poor beginners. These guys were really angry so they turned their amps to a higher volume and the drummer started to drive the band more intensively. They wanted to show me who the real professional is. Finally we completed the recording sessions by the end of the day, we made it. I would not have expected that insulting my customers might work to drive them to perfection but in case of Punk Rock musicians this strategy tuned out to be a very effective way" he smiles.

After 'Space And Emotion' and 'Emotional Distances' a third concept album will follow. "This is sure so far, but it is still unclear when it will be completed. In the last months I met so many interesting and enthusiastic musicians and I want to play more live with different bands. I discovered that Austria has a very interesting music scene far beyond Alpine folk music. Another idea is to bring The Pyramidis Project on stage. At the moment it is a studio project but it would be a great experience to perform the music live on stage with a group of convinced musicians, orchestra and, if we are lucky, some great artist of my musical inspiration. Who knows," Mario smiles. Check the band out at www.pyramidis.net

From Atlanta, Georgia, we find diverse groove rock band **MARGINS OF SOCIETY,** they have a new nine track CD out now called 'Disconnected' that is a hugely satisfying record that covers a lot of musical scope, from rock, to prog, to modern rock, you could call the band arty funk groove rock, as when you listen to their songs, you are listening to everything, the instruments, vocals, lyrics, etc, there is so much go on throughout 'Disconnected. The band are Trevor Houck - lead vocals, Nick Smith - bass, Greg Harman - drums, Scott Shackelford - guitar and Marc Weaver - guitar.

When listening to a lot of bands now, that after hearing three or four songs, you've pretty much heard what they have to offer. They may have a great sound, but the songs start to sound the same. When you listen to Margins Of Society music, you hear a variety show of rock. "We are all over the map with it. We go from hard and heavy to smooth and mellow," says bassist Nick Smith. All of the band's songs are distinctly different and have their own vibe, which is one of the reasons why I love this record so much. "We would like to say that we are akin to Led Zeppelin in this way," says Nick. "Their albums took you through a range of feelings and emotions from start to finish, some hard, some soft, some strange, some of everything. Odds are that not everybody will like every song. But we find that everybody likes at least some of our songs (nobody likes none of our songs). That's starting to sound lyrical," he tells me.

Nick has been friends with Trevor (vocals) and Scott (guitar) since he was 13 years old. "We were infatuated with heavy metal music like Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Ozzy, and such. The three of us decided to learn guitar and played every day after school. After a few years, I joined an 80's thrash/metal band 'Akathesia' with Greg and Marc. They already had 2 guitar players, Marc being one, so I switched to bass. After Scott replaced a member on guitar, the line-up included 4 of our 5 existing members. We successfully played in and around the Atlanta area," Nick explains.

In 1991, the guys went their separate ways musically and took a 20 year band hiatus. In 2011, they came together for fun and to see if they still had any 'magic'. New awesome songs poured out like a faucet. "We brought in our old childhood friend Trevor to be our singer, and it all CLICKED! In 2013, we released our first album 'Marginal at Best', won a local 27-band battle of the bands in 2014, and just released our second album 'Disconnected' on 11/14/2015," says Nick.

The bands musical inspirations are vast, everything from Slayer and Pantera, Pink Floyd, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Stevie Wonder, sappy 70's stuff, modern Alternative, and everything in between. "We like just about anything that's got heart, substance, is unique, and has some attitude in it," he tells me. The material on the band's first album, 'Marginal at Best' was mostly heavy rock. With the new album 'Disconnected', they set out to prove to themselves and their fans that they could write, perform, and produce an album that incorporates styles beyond metal/hard rock. "Mind you, it's still a rock album. But in each song, you hear maybe a taste of reggae, jazz, alternative, even some funk in there. It was a lot of fun to make. We're better musicians as a result and really happy with how the project turned out," says Nick.

The band outside of music have are all grown up with regular lives. They all have children, jobs, and all the other trappings of day to day life. "MUSIC is our interest and escape outside of our normal lives. MUSIC is what we do to have fun and get away from it all. MUSIC is our passion and our art. When you've gone around the sun a few dozen times as we have, there's no lack of sources to occupy your time and attention. But, since forming 'Margins of Society' in 2011, MUSIC is the air we breathe," says Nick.

The band took money won from a local battle of the bands to start recording the 'Disconnected' album in local RexTrax Studios in early 2014. After getting some good solid tracks, they recorded the rest of the album in their own studio where they also mixed and produced the record. "We've got a lot of good in-house expertise and gear and really enjoy the process. Outside studios are cool in that they bring in ears and ideas other than our own. But, using our own studio gives us the luxury and benefit of taking as much time as we need to get it right and to be able to experiment without being 'on the clock'. At some point on a future project, we may bring in a producer. For this project (Disconnected), it's got our fingerprints all over it. The album was mastered at Griffin Mastering for some fresh ears and final polishing. From start to finish, it took us about a year," explains Nick.

At a recent gig, the band had a 'bit' of a feedback issue coming out of the stage monitors in relation to Marc's guitar gear. "Though we had a brief sound check, the feedback started screaming at our faces out of the gate every time Marc stopped playing. He managed as best he could by using his guitar volume knob and even stepping off the stage into the crowd at times. Little seemed to help as we grinded through our set of heavy and mellow tunes with Marc sweating it out while creating feedback not even Hendrix would appreciate. We didn't know it at the time, but the