

**Reviews CD: "74 giorni"**

This is the third album for this contemporary Italian band from Sicily. I haven't listened to their previous releases so I cannot offer you a deep analysis or a specific comparison. Conqueror's new project is very interesting being a complete and mature concept work dedicated to the lucky/unlucky adventure of journalist, TV conductor and famous Italian adventurer Ambrogio Fogar and his fellow journalist Mauro Mancini who tried, in 1978, to circumnavigate the Antarctic lands with a ship named "Surprise".

Unfortunately an orca (a killer whale) caused a shipwreck when they were near the Falkland Islands. The two friends went adrift on a small raft for 74 long days. Finally, a boat was sailing around there and rescued them. Unluckily, Mauro Mancini died only two days after for a pulmonary disease.

This is the fascinating and sad concept upon which all the themes are based. Musically the album appears to be very inspired but its true prog nature is revealed only from the fifth song on, after a long introduction (interesting by the way) made of mainstream melodic pop-prog. Their battle horses are the nice alternating between saxophone and Tull-esque flute, the fiery electric guitar solos as in "L'Ora del Parlare" (5,49 mns), the sparse touches of sixties-like-keyboards as in "Non Maturi per l'Aldilà" (5,46 mns), the exciting changing moods in the elegant melodic structure, the strong interplay between bass, drums and mini-moog as in the beautiful "Nebbia ad Occhi Chiusi" (9,34 mns) or "Cambio di Rotta" (5,11 mns, excellent also for sax).

Above all, wonderful female vocals by Simona Rigano. Someone would compare them to the Italian seventies band Apoteosi. I disagree, they're less PFM inspired. A vague comparison could be found in other fellow contemporary Italian band Aries but not completely being their sound a little bit more varied than that Zuffanti's project. Very good the piano parts and interludes especially when blended with flute and fast drumming as in "Eleutherios" (6,33 mns) or "Master Stefanos" (5,57 mns). I'm not sure but sometimes I've heard some light and mellow Mediterranean flavour.

I wasn't sure about the final evaluation of this album due to its first part which doesn't describe very well what's going on later. Notwithstanding this is an album that needs more spins to be completely appreciated. Now I know that many progheads will be pleased!

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[www.conqueror.it](http://www.conqueror.it)