

January 26, 2013

Kilminster; Dave: Scarlet - The Director's Cut

There can be no doubt that if your CV includes stints with John Wetton, Geoff Downes, Carl Palmer, Keith Emerson and Roger Waters that you are a hugely respected guitarist. Dave Kilminster is one such fret caresser, with his undoubted talents lifting and inspiring the long loved music of his different band leaders. Therefore you'd expect his sophomore solo stab *Scarlet - The Director's Cut* to be a progressive masterpiece filled with stunning musicianship, fancy licks, plenty of tricks and possibly the odd guest-star appearance. Thankfully, you'd be both right and wrong with those assumptions. The stunning musicianship is firmly in place and there are plenty of (restrained) tricks utilised. However the temptation to litter S-TDC with big-name cameos is wisely resisted, the fiery licks you might expect are kept to a bare minimum and on the whole this album is more relaxed progressive goes funk, than out and out Prog.



If you're disappointed by any of those inclusions, omissions, you shouldn't be, with the results being an extremely well balanced album that slowly but surely weaves its way into your subconscious, making a stronger, more insistent impression with each subsequent visit. At first the easy, almost Police like "Static" can be a little too unassuming, "Chance" too honest and open and "Big Blue" a little too obvious funky rock. However persevere and the first track reveals a chorus that uplifts through its self aware melancholy, the second wonderful vocal melodies and a gentle breezy confidence, while "B-B" pushes and pulses with intent. More instant however are "Liar Liar", with its one word bursts of the word repeated in the song title being too hard to resist joining in with and "Angel" seducing and convincing through a catchy chorus and complex, if deceptively simple structure. If you were looking for fault - and truth be told we all do, don't we? - it would be a fair accusation to suggest that the slow, easy going passages on this release do all tend to sway into the same loose funky way, jazzy jangles, alluding to a sameness that lessens with familiarity. However the songwriting itself is strong enough to allay some of those fears, while the musicianship from Kilminster (guitars and excellent vocals), Pete Riley (drums) and Phil Williams (bass), puts almost any others niggles to rest. Although extra guitar contributions from co-producer (with Kilminster) Jamie Humphries and backing vocals from Anne-Marie Helder (Panic Room) don't exactly hurt either. Interestingly as the "Director's Cut" portion of the album title suggests, this version is actually Dave's second attempt at this album, with him initially feeling that *Scarlet* lacked the depth he desired - this version adding more guitars and vocals to the mix. Now I haven't heard take-one of *Scarlet*, but on the evidence laid out here, the extra efforts have paid off and big time, with layers of vocals and stinging solos adding the colour needed to carry off the style of music presented. Although a strong, restrained production helps too. Maybe more refined and pulled back than you'd have expected, but with *Scarlet - The Director's Cut*, Dave Kilminster has come up with something that stands out by not trying to stand out and impresses by not trying too hard to impress. Many could learn from both those skills.

Track Listing

1. Silent Scream
2. Static
3. Just Crazy
4. Angel
5. Chance
6. Big Blue
7. Brightest Star
8. Liar, Liar
9. Rain...(On Another Planet)
10. Harkness

Added: January 25th 2013

Reviewer: [Steven Reid](#)

Score: ★★★★★

Related Link: [Dave Kilminster Online](#)

Hits: 45

Language: English