

Angels?

By

Forest Field

Written by

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It was an absolute delight to see a new **Forest Field** release coming my way to review, if it was anywhere near the standard of the previous album *Onwards and Upwards*, we were going to be in for a real treat constant reader.

So let's start on another journey with Peter Cox and crew and the first piece is the opener called **Broken Wings**. This one is a classic Cox creation; you will find a tempo change at just over half way in and some stunning guitar work soon after, this is a really creative start to open up the album with, almost cinematic at times.

You remember those moments when you hear something so good, that the hairs stand up on your arms? Those goose bumps of magical grace and power are unleashed upon you right now, so get ready, here it is, **Angels!** With the superb vocals of Phil Vincent, we have a cracker of a track that not only rocks; it weighs in with some extremely heavy pounding guitar. At times Peter Cox's guitar, reminded me of classic Thin Lizzy and Scott Gorham's churning axe in particular.

Left at Cloud 9 is next up, this one may surprise you after the last offering, and an almost ethereal and angelic start will greet your ears. At just under the minute mark, the refrains of an acoustic guitar and some light synths swirl among your intrigued senses. There is almost sense of the classical in this piece.

Well this one would go down well in the U.K and it is called **It looks like Rain**. Once more the beginning is deceptive and a slow sullen mood can be found here, Vincent's voice is its usual perfection and his ability to illustrate with his vocals is world class. The harmonies on this piece are simply delightful and the

arrangement of the composition and its structure with subtle tempo changes makes this one sublime and extremely listenable piece indeed. This track also contains some very delicious Floyd styled guitar within it as well.

While the next track header may remind you of the classic 1938 Cagney movie, here we have a stylish piece that I know you will love dear reader, the acoustic qualities here are classy and well-crafted and by now I have a real sense of how **Forest Field** have progressed since their last album. **Angel with a Dirty Face** is in my opinion a clever and very carefully constructed composition that you can't help but enjoy. Listen in at just over two minutes for some incredible elevation in energy. One has to admire the guitar of Cox on this track; the China White man has really pulled the stops out on this one, I truly believe that this should be released as a single; it has a superb melody and an extremely memorable chorus and I loved it.

Now dear reader, listen up for something a little mystical called **Message for a Messenger**. Cox on guitar is incredibly inventive and adds some teasing harmonics and drives the narrative in with an underpinned sense of mystery and imagination, combined with some almost travelling Rush style guitar, we have a track, that really has a sense of drama deep in the weave. The piano kicks in at the half way point and almost duels with the acoustic guitar for a few moments. At well over six minutes in dear reader, you have a composition here that seems to create as it goes on. There is a delightful explosive guitar at around four and a half minutes also and this has all the hall marks of a classic, the driving Sammy Hager style riffs here are awesome.

Now a few years back, I remember one of my favourite bands the Scorpions released a track called The Zoo. This song however, is a horse of a different colour and shows what a class act **Forest Field** are, perhaps one should ask, are they really the pioneers of Progressive New Age Rock?

The Zoo, as a track, almost lifts you back to the good old days of hard rock and has a real base solidly clamped into the classic 70's era of Prog. Just after four minutes in there is a real elevation of power from Cox, combine that with the keyboards and Vincent's brilliant vocals, you have an all-out winner here and one that I personally will be playing for years.

Anyone fancy a trip down **Lovers Lane**? Now for a cheeky little number which has an air of lightness and fun about it, the guitar is gentle and almost calming, the bass and percussion are a perfect mix and this is yet another arrangement that oozes class from every pore. Cox and his electric axe drive the narrative in this song with an ease, the keyboards almost drift us back to Gillian's time with Deep Purple. This is one of those numbers that is laid back and easy to listen to at any time.

We move to a curious composition called **Change Me**. Check out the drum solo that starts this piece, its vibrant and exciting and then the churning bass and driving guitars are back with Vincent in almost Ronnie James Dio mode here. The feel of this track did indeed have a little Black Sabbath essence to it at times, but this defiant composition will be played by those who either have or are about to be jilted in love, listen though to the guitar in this composition, Cox has been in superb form on this release and here he has to be elevated to an axe hero. We fly into full prog mode at just over the half way marker, with some Wakeman style wizardry, here is a track dear reader and listener, that will give you the strength and defiance to carry on.

The penultimate piece is called **In Excelsis**. The start is has a careful progression about it, then as the song moves through its narrative we are treated with a multitude of extremely well performed instrumentation. We nearly have a little Keith Emmerson styled hoedown on keyboards, but the driving guitar of Cox as always, takes the centre stage and once more creates an absolutely stunning composition.

So let's take one more listen before we head on the path to leave the woodlands of **Forest Field** with the piece **Spot On The Sun**, and if you thought that Cox and crew would go quietly, oh boy how wrong could you be. Even the great Ritchie Blackmore would be proud of the guitar here, it's a weapon that Cox has wielded so majestically not only on this piece, but on the entire album, Vincent's delivery and quality here are without question and this track is an incredibly energetic way to leave what is an album of absolute quality.

Angels in my opinion is once more a bar raiser for **Peter Cox and Forest Field**, this is, without doubt their best album so far and I can see this one doing incredibly well on the OWMR world 100m chart. If you're a rock fan and you

have never heard of this band, I urge you with every fibre in my body to buy it, **Forest Field** offer something different in the world of Prog Rock, they have a unique energy and style that I hope will drive them onto global respect and success, I completely recommend this album to you all and its unique properties and stylish performance, its sublime production and arrangements had made this one of my favourite albums listened to so far this year. So don't hesitate, make Angels part of your musical life right now, you won't regret it.