disappearance
Copenicus | Nevermore Inc (2009)

By Glenn Astarita

New York-based performing poet Copenicus talks about subatomic particles such as quark gluon plasma, which pertains to the building blocks of matter, and issues centered on the possibilities of an atomic New Orleans. As the press release states, the artist generally improves upon themes and motifs. Copenicus’ artistry and discography spans several decades, with Disappearance effectively transmitting his authoritative presence.

With longtime musical director and instrumentalist Pierce Turner steering the current, the music is firmly entrenched within the progressive-rock realm, where man and science coalesce for a cunningly articulated program. Copenicus prompts us to "bow...to the electron neutrino," spiced with plaintive cries and cacophonous musical textures.

Interestingly enough, the instrumentalists mimic the leader’s voice with a call-and-response methodology, in addition to providing background support. Copenicus undoubtedly means what he says due to his commanding delivery, that can instill either fear or humor. Hence, it’s a nicely balanced string of events, amid quietly organized subtleties and unanticipated shifts in musical architectures.

The band sustains interest by morphing country-blues, English folk, and psychedelic rock into the equation. At times, Copenicus surfaces as an angry prophet. Despite asking if we’re all afraid of God in concert with other inquisitive statements, it’s not overly austere or cerebral. He generates food for thought with off-the-wall concepts, and topics of concern that many, perhaps, fail to contemplate.

Ultimately, Copenicus feeds the mind’s eye with a myriad of persuasive musings, although he seldom lets matters get out of control. In a roundabout way, he almost succeeds in convincing that life might be a sprawling farse, and that scientists’ quest for the unanswerable could be a huge waste of time and energy. A compelling and altogether mind-bending voyage it is.

Track listing: 12 subatomic particles: The Quark Gluon Plasma; The Blind Zombies: Humanity created the illusion of itself; Atomic New Orleans; Poor Homo Sapientes; Revolution.

Personnel: Pierce Turner: musical director, Hammond B3 organ, acoustic piano, vocals, percussion; Larry Kimani: electric guitar, vocals; Mike Pazaz: electric guitar; Bob Hoffman: steel guitar; Raimundo Penafort: violin, acoustic guitar, barden, percussion, vocals; Cesar Argandoa: electric and acoustic guitar; Fred Poulides: trombone; Rob Thomas: violin; Matty Fillow: tenor saxophone, percussion; Marvin Wright: bass guitar, electric guitar, percussion; George Adams: tuba, contrabass, bass guitar; Thomas Hamlin: drums, percussion; Mark Broddin: drums, percussion.

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