

AOR CLASSICS

ISSUE 4

UK £1.50 Europe £2
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FREE TAPE
with this issue
featuring

NARO
&
MARATHON

*The Definitive Guide To AOR
And Pomp Obscurities*

AOR CLASSICS ISSUE #4

JULY 1994

Well it's been a year now since we embarked on the journey taking us to the production of AOR Classics. We've come a significant distance since the formulation of the original ideas and the production of issue number one. The circulation of the magazine is steadily growing with the release of each issue and we are hopeful of sustaining this trend throughout the next year. We are now offering subscriptions for AOR Classics at a cost of £10 for 5 issues if you are in the UK, 4 issues throughout the rest of Europe, and 3 issues anywhere else. Issue 5 is due out on the 17th October 1994 and the cover price will be £2 (UK), £2.50 (Europe), £3.50 (ROW). If you are interested in taking a subscription to the magazine please send £10 to Scott Middlemiss at 20 Roseneath Place, Marchmont, Edinburgh, EH9 1JD, Scotland. Cheques, money/postal orders etc. should be made payable to Scott Middlemiss, or you can add £10 to any JBEX AOR or AOR Rarities & Deletions orders. **WE CAN NOT ACCEPT ANYTHING MADE PAYABLE TO "AOR CLASSICS"**

Free Tape : A promotional tape has been produced for distribution with this issue of the magazine. Featuring tracks from Naro and Marathon the tape was co-ordinated by Brian Weston of Infinity Records (see advert for details). If you have not received a tape with this issue please contact Brian at Infinity.

News : Both the Aerial albums (see reviews in this issue) are to be released shortly on CD by MaGaDa Inc. The Storm have been dropped by Interscope after completing their second album entitled "In The Eye Of A Storm", however the good news is the album has been released in Japan. Scott and Fraser recently had a chat with Scotty Hall (Idle Eyes) in Vancouver. In addition to some session work he is working on new project at the moment, more details when we have them. Tom Hogge is to be found playing piano every Friday at "The Lounge" in Vancouver, home of late seventies band The Biz in which he featured (see issue #2 review).

From Issue #3 : The Jester album "It's Time" has been given the Megarock treatment and the result is a major sound improvement from what was already a quality release. Copies of the CD are available from Jbex AOR or AOR Rarities & Deletions priced £10 including P&P.

From Issue #2 : The album sleeve notes on the Delta release give us no indication what the band members play. Thanks to Stephen Allen for sending us the biography, Maureen McDonald - Vocals, Tom Ferguson - Guitars, Jeff Stillman - Bass, Staff Fieldhouse - Drums, Paul Mauro - Guitars. The biography makes no mention of Steve Halter, keyboards possibly?

Back Issues : Issue #1 is now sold out however we do have some copies of issues #2 and #3 available priced the same as this issue. If you have not yet got these issues send payment to the subscription address (see above) and we'll rush them to you.

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ROYAL HUNT - LAND OF BROKEN HEARTS

1993, Royal

FM

- Andre Anderson - Keyboards & Guitars
- Henrick Brockmann - Vocals
- Steen Mogensen - Bass
- Kenneth Olsen - Drums

- Produced by Andre Anderson

Royal Hunt are an outfit based around the seemingly unlimited talents of Russian/Dane Andre Anderson. Not only



has Anderson composed and produced the entire album, he takes care of the guitar and keyboards to boot. The music is classically influenced uptempo pomp very reminiscent of *Yngwie Malmsteen* circa "Trilogy". In fact, add a bit of *Red Dawn*, *Rainbow* and a selection of many of the Scandinavian acts and you are well on the way to understanding

what Royal Hunt's sound is. The most enjoyable moments are definitely the quick paced cuts including "Flight" and "One By One". Although these verge on Hard Rock there are no shortage of keyboard blended into the production. In addition both "Land of Broken Hearts" and "Stranded" deserve special merit as the two most memorable songs on offer and for their multilayered vocals especially during the choruses.

In April a mini C.D. was released and the band are currently working in the studio on the follow up album. "Land of Broken Hearts" gained progressive release around the world with the most enthusiasm from Japan (there's a shocker!) A US release was struck recently and the second album should receive a world-wide release.

STORMWING - AWAKENING

1993, Top

FM

- Jay Matthew - Lead Vocals
- Ken Brainstorm - Drums & Vocals
- Jess Blake - Guitars & Vocals
- Jimmy Wance - Keyboards & Vocals
- Kim Hightower - Bass & Vocals

- Produced by P H Rics & Stormwing

I would first like to acknowledge Pentti for bringing this act to the attention of the AOR Classics staff. This rather classy Finnish outfit have produced a five track CD EP in a limited quantity primarily for promotional purposes. "Unchain My Heartbeat" is an absolute monster of an opener featuring a storming keyboard intro before the guitars come crunching in. Although reminiscent of many of the Scandinavian bands of

recent years (*Talk of the Town*, *Glory and Dalton*) they avoid the trap of overtly bland or repetitive songs. "Angel" is a similar uptempo number in the style of *Europe* circa "Prisoner of Paradise". I have to say both these numbers highlight the outstanding production throughout which the band and Rics have to be credited for. "Good Morning" is the only ballad on offer, and although I am not a great fan of acoustic songs this is very credible. Matthew's vocals are clear throughout, a point where many continental bands have failed in the past.

Stormwing are currently in the studio recording approx seven more songs to add to the EP for a full album release. At present a deal is already together in Japan (where there seems to be a thriving AOR scene at present including many re-issues of Classics in addition to new bands). In the mean time lets hope the guys can secure a European/World-wide deal for the album's release (although I would advise on dropping the live in the studio "Crazy Days"!)

Additionally, Ken Brainstorm has just forwarded me a tape of seven new songs they have just recorded. Even though this is only an early mix I have to say there's more good music here. In contrast to the EP we open here with a ballad in the shape of "Tender Point", very reminiscent of *Return*, especially the vocals. "Stay Overnight" and "Spitfire" are real rockers, like the best parts of fellow Scandinavians *Pole Position*. I have to say though, the trump card here is "Paper Card". A brutal bass and drum section lays down the bass for a song that hits you like a sledgehammer between the eyes. A change of rhythm and key midway through, similar in style to *Dream Theater* adds a whole new dimension to the chorus. The only song I can't get on with is "Home Sweet Home", a bit to glam / sleazy for my tastes. I believe Stormwing are still working on new songs and should have enough material for a full album.

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Phone/Fax : (967) 7231 755

WANTED - OVER THE TOP

1993, Torgrim Eide

KT

- Eric Piscatella - Guitars
- Rocket - Bass
- Beaty Sweet - Drums
- Jojo Thompson - Vocals

- Produced by Torgrim Eide

Wanted are a four piece from Norway with a good rocking sound and have turned up with an indie release that deserves some attention. The overall sound reminds me a little of early TNT mixed with a helping of "NWOBHM".

The album opener "Suzie" has an early Michael Schenker aura about it and if it's good old basic rock your after then this is just the ticket. Other recommended cuts include "Crucial", "Angel", "Long Legs" and "Shot (in the night)". A stand out cut would have to be "You can't hurt me" and is representative