

CHRONICLE of NEW AGE MUSIC:

THE SOUND OF ASCENSION N°17

The Beatles changed the world of music with their album “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band”. Inspired by this 'once in a century record', countless Pop and Rock musicians developed their own individual ways of expression.

This resulted in music which alternated between examining the darkest unconsciousness, over poetic and sensitive descriptions of reality, and the dreaming of political and social visions for a new and better world. Each and every reflection of the spirit of the time was now possible now. For the five young musicians who called themselves "YES", even this was not enough.

The dawn of a new spiritual awareness had an impact. "YES" started to create nothing less than their own alternative universe. Like many other progressive Rock bands at the time, "YES" was searching for new dimensions of music, not seeking to feed the music-machine, as singer Jon Anderson noted.

Nevertheless, or even as a result of this, "YES" became quite famous and very successful. From their first record in July 1969, 3 years or 4 records later the "YES" universe was established. To complete this concept, the Band started collaborating with artist Roger Dean who designed and painted the covers from the album “Fragile” with some interruptions up until now. His paintings were equal to the music and he became almost as famous as the Band itself. The last song on “Fragile”, “Heart of the Sunrise”- what a title! – was a precursor for the years to come.

The music appears in the form of suites. This allows the combination and integration of all possible musical elements. Powerful rhythmic structures alternate between quiet and very beautiful moments. One of the most remarkable suites from this period is on the album “Close to the Edge” from the 5th record with the same title. A paradise of sounds, including beautiful choir singing and the noise of falling water are audible in the middle section. The lyrics are still poetic and fantastic on this record, but in 1974 "YES" entered a distinct spiritual space with the release of “Tales from Topographic Oceans”.

The double album is inspired by the Indian Shastric Scriptures and contains four epic musical pieces, each more than 20 minutes long. It is a complete universe of sounds and visions and one of the most ambitious records in the history of Rock and Pop.

Not unlike John Coltrane or Pharoah Sanders, "YES" transposed Eastern Philosophy without using Indian or Arabic musical elements or instruments.

It has been thirty years since "YES" appeared on the music scene. They were not copied, but an inspiration for many musicians to go their own way, individually and spiritually. A beautiful example of their creativity was produced on two double CDs called “Keys to Ascension” containing live versions of their old songs and new studio excerpts.

The musical message of "YES" is totally light-full and describes the universe as an expression of “The Revealing Silence of God”.