



Review iO pages (NL) september 2013

Virtually – the Relatives & Phil Miller (Relatives Records)

On 'Virtually', the second studio album of the British- Dutch formation the Relatives, we are talking about a couple of mini-reunions; Richard Sinclair doing his unique vocals on 'On My mInd' accompanied by former band- mate Phil Miller from Hatfield & the North.

Miller already played with the Relatives on 'Live in Rotterdam' (2011) and on this new recording he is definitely the featured guitarist. In the past he played with bassist/vocalist Jack Monck in Delivery. Surprisingly enough the same Jack Monck, who played with Syd Barret in 'Starz', is the founder of the Relatives together with keyboardist WillemJan Droog. According to the press release, songs have been praised by Jonathan Coe, known to the 'delicious' (fanatic Canterbury music fans) – for his very convincing televised novel, "The Rotters' Club".

This suggests that Virtually is an album within the family of Caravan and related music.

'Going Down' and 'New Dawn' actually not so much-they have a a real Steely Dan vibe.

Rhythm guitar, horns, electric piano and backing vocals all fit together perfectly , and also the tasty guitar solo. 'Leading the Fight' and 'When?' are both a bit more relaxed with a sort of 'Michael Frank like' strong saxophone and flute playing by Marc Hadley.

This jazzy feeling continues in the live recorded instrumental track 'A Stately Waltz', which completely lives up to its name . At last we discover the Canterbury style in the instrumental 'Spaghetti' , thanks to the flute that unfolds a fluent,sensual melody doubled by the guitar.

In the relaxed 'New Ship In Town', we expect Randy Newan's voice to burst in at any moment, but in this tune, the instruments state the warm and engaging melody...Finally the ballad 'On My Mind' emerges... Intimate vocals by Richard Sinclair, a jazz-rock guitar solo and a velvety flugelhorn passage, this is a beautiful end for a very accesible jazzy pop record, springing from a versatile and diverse musical family. (René Yedema)