

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W
X Y Z # New By Author



Release Date: 2004

Track Listing

- 1) Swimmer In The Sand
- 2) Angel Of March
- 3) Holy Wolf Suite
- 4) Evelyn
- 5) I'm Still Searching
- 6) The End

[Web Site](#)
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Date: 10/16/2004

Format: CD (Album)

I must admit, the only progressive rock I've ever heard from Italy has been PFM's *Cook*, and I've loved that album for years. So I jumped at the chance to listen to another Italian band, Arcansiel, and *Swimming In The Sand*.

The release information with this CD states, "This Italian band released three albums between 1988 and 1994, and *Swimming In The Sand* is their "best of," that is to say they re-recorded in 2003 their six favorite songs."

The background info also calls Arcansiel's music "a strange mix of neo-progressive songs ala Marillion, '70s influences most notably Genesis, mixed with an Italian progressive tradition referring to PFM and Banco." And I have to agree, at least with comparisons to Marillion and Genesis. Arcansiel's lead singer, Paolo Baltaro, has a fairly unique voice with the dramatic intensity and raspiness of a Fish or Peter Gabriel, without coming across as just another Gabriel clone.

The songs' styling is pretty unique as well. For those fearing that they might need an Italian interpreter to understand the lyrics, don't worry – it's all in English. "Swimmer in The Sand" and, to some extent, "Angel Of March" are in more of a pop vein, but the band's true creativity comes through in the remaining four tracks.

The nearly 14-minute "Holy Wolf Suite" takes some serious digesting in the lyrical department. Coming from 1994's *Normality Of Perversion*, it might help to have the "full story" behind what the ideas/thoughts were behind and around this song. After all, it isn't every day you run into requests for anal sex in song lyrics. Or am I missing something in these particular lyrics? But the music in this piece is excellent.

The epic parts of this release come in the songs "Evelyn" from *Four Daisies* and the 21-minute "I'm Still Searching," from *Stillsearching*. These songs pretty much have it all, with some fine violin technique by Barbara Rubin, crisp drumming from Diego Marzi, solid bass and keys playing by Baltaro, wonderful sax and flute sounds from Sandro Marinoni, and some guitar parts from Gianni Opezzo that sound like they were influenced



heavily by Steve Hackett-era Genesis.

This is a very worthwhile listen.

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