

Gondwana is a Place I Go to On My Couch



DISCourse

with Bill Polonsky

I have to preface this week's review by stating that I have had a cold for the last month and my general mental condition is woozy.

It is under this delicate condition that I began my review of Steve Jones' new Fornequiem CD, Gondwana.

The last thing I thought I would be faced with is a polished electronic/ambient CD produced by a Yukon artist. Who knew?

I have a small yet real guilty pleasure in listening to synthetic music. I find such music particularly meditative and therapeutic after a long day of working for the man.

My first experience of this album was with headphones, lying on my couch in the sun.

When I regained consciousness, my partner quipped, "It's a good thing you were laying down otherwise you may have hurt

yourself." I blame the cough syrup.

In any case, it follows that music of this kind tends to put you in a relaxed frame of mind if you concentrate on it.

The title Gondwana refers to a super continent that started to break up due to continental shift between 150 and 170 million years ago, coinciding with the appearance of proto butterflies in the fauna of the earth.

While I am no lepidopterist or expert in the paleo-geography of planet earth, I know what I like.

I hear these two elements paralleled in this music. The general tone of the album is a gentle but solid progression of themes that slowly morph into other motifs as the music commits to another direction.

Above this background, highlights tweak interest in other parts of the stereo spectrum creating a latticework of aural treats. It is thus that the story of Gondwana unfolds.

There is a quiet urgency about this album that harkens back to a time, before the 1980s, when synthesizers created music as



Fornequiem's newest CD, *Gondwana*, is synthetic music that is meditative and therapeutic.

music and not driving a happy beat for happy people.

Even without interrupting the flow of the entire CD, I found the individual selections on this album short.

With a longer format song, the themes that recur and evolve have time to mature within the song. I'll take this into account when I paint my masterpiece, until then I'll stand satisfied with the arrangement of these songs.

I can imagine the Yukon athletes this winter, resplendent in their colours, parading into the Canada Winter Games Opening Ceremony heralded in with Gondwana.

It's a dream of mine ... so get off my cloud.

I found the whole experience of reviewing this CD refreshing and somewhat nostalgic.

There are times throughout the album when a certain synthesizer patch reminds me of French musician Jean Michel Jarre.

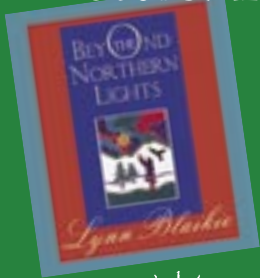
On another couch and in another time, ah yes, the basements of my youth.

This album may not be for everyone, but for those who still have a scratchy old album of Oxygene in the back closet you may be pleasantly surprised to hear what one artist in the Yukon is up to.

Visit Fornequiem on the web at www.fornequiem.com or on MySpace. Both of Steve Jones' Fornequiem albums, *Gondwana* and *Anarchy*, can be found at Triple J's.

Bill Polonsky can be contacted for reviews on his couch or at strangethingsdon@hotmail.com.

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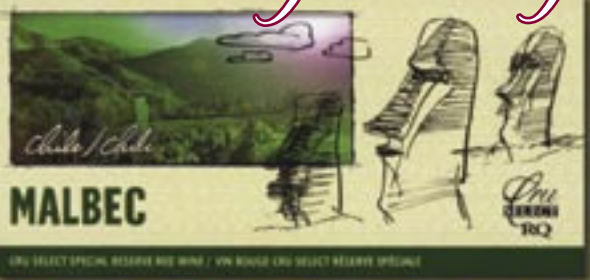
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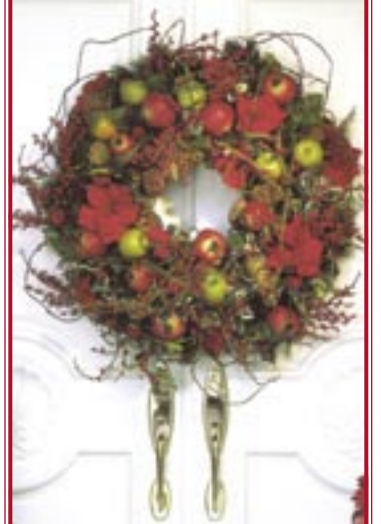
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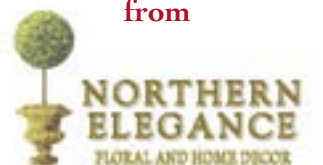
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