

StoneLake

Reviews of: "Reincarnation"

Date: 10/01-2006

Destiny Records: *D. Cockett*

Essentially a duo consisting of vocalist Peter Grundström and multi instrumentalist Jan Åkesson, Sweden's StoneLake have chipped in with what could very well be the best independent melodic hard rock / power metal release of the year! The pair have a shared history which goes back more than twenty years, but for one reason or another, it's taken them this long to channel their combined energies into something more tangible.

Their stated influences range from 70's legends such as Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin, through 80's superstars like Van Halen, Whitesnake, and Dokken (all of which can be heard in the eleven songs included here), although they're not particularly derivative of any. From a musical perspective, they deftly merge the vibrant energy of Talisman or Edguy, with the passionate intensity of TNT (Grundström does a very good Tony Harnell impression), and when you throw in Åkesson's powerful, overblown production, the end results raise eyebrows from the off. Considering that Åkesson has done all the instrumentation himself - you want to hear some of the guitar work ... wow! - he's done a damn good job of making StoneLake sound like a proper band, and when you add the Harnellesque vocals on top, it becomes a band capable of taking on anyone in this arena. I'm not kidding, the more I listen to songs such as 'You Strike Me With Love', 'Mistreated Heart' or 'Only One Reason', the more I'm convinced that this lot are something really special. From majestic, overblown, crescendo driven rockers, to smouldering ballads, StoneLake prove to be masters of their craft - an exceptional debut!

Date: 05/09 - 2006

Strutter Webzine: *Gabor Kleinbloesem*

8,5 (10)

I recently reviewed a CD single of the band STONELAKE, well, they now have a full-length CD out, which is a very impressive recorded indeed. The album has a big full sound, which musically is a mix of classic 80s melodic rock and today's progressive metal, ending up sounding like a mix between PAGAN'S MIND, TNT, ANGRA and VANDENPLAS. The band is made up of singer Peter Grundstorm and multi-instrumentalist Jan Åkesson. These 2 musicians met each other more than 20 years ago in Sweden, where they played in bands together for several years, but after a break of 15 (!) years they really were keen on releasing an album together, which has resulted in the STONELAKE CD, which is now out. The album contains 11 tracks, of which the best tracks are "Saint or evil", "Mistreated heart", "Wonderland" and "Walk on the rainbow". The songs are super melodic, with awesome guitarplaying and great vocalwork. The guitar riffs are heavy and akin to pure Progressive Metal, with even touches of Power Metal, but on the other hand the melodies and choruses in each song are clearly influenced by 80s Melodic Hardrock (TNT, QUEENSRYCHE, DOKKEN). This is one of those CDs I can easily recommend, because it is a high quality release.

Date: 15/07 - 2006

Target Records: *Robert. S*

This will be without a doubt one of the biggest surprises in 2006. The duo Jan Åkesson and Peter Grundström are coming along with a fantastic mixture of full blown melodic hardrock and power metal. The history starts in 1984, when the two guys met each other for the first time. During the following years they both were playing in different melodicrock- and AOR-bands of Swedens underground scene (best known were Why Not and Perfect Strangers). 15 years later, in 2005, Åkesson and Grundström met again and decided to found a project that was called Stonelake. I'm not pushing to hard, when I claim that this is the climax of their previous careers. With a powerful sound, amazing guitars and excellent vocals the songs come along in the vein of EDGUY, TNT and TALISMAN. Guitar wizard Jan Åkesson plays brilliant solos and amazing riffs while singer Peter Grundström's voice climbs up into unbelievable heights and reminds me a bit of Tobias Sammet of EDGUY or Tony Harnell of TNT.

The bombastic opener comes along like an unknown EDGUY song: fast, with a hard guitar riff and a big chorus, while "Saint Or Evil" is a song the TNT guys - I'm sure - would die for. Anyway, the 2 guys recorded this album without any big record label in their back and speaking of sound, songwriting and musicianship, it's one of the best releases I listened to in the past months. A killer album that is really worth having!

Date: 07/07 - 2006

Melodicrock.com: *A. McNeice*

86 (10)

Stonelake is the Swedish duo of Jan Åkesson (instruments) and Peter Grundström (vocals). The band has roots going as far back as the mid-80s, but only recently did the stars align in favor of the guys recording their first album. And quite a debut it is too. The band's own bio describes their sound as accurately as I could - melodic hard rock in the vein of Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin and Bad Company, but later era acts such as Whitesnake, Van Halen, Journey, Riot and Dokken. The end result is a powerful guitar driven melodic hard rock record which is big on melodies as well as riffs and featuring some powerhouse higher pitch vocals along the lines of Tony Mills, Tony Harnell and Rob Moratti. The band has quite a groove too, and impressively, they don't have the feel of a duo.

The quality production gives the guys that full band sound.

Once through the intro, the double hit of You Strike Me With Love and Saint Or Evil gets the album off to a heavy rocking start. Riffs dominate, but very melodic choruses and some soaring vocals make them very memorable. All I Need is a more keyboard friendly AOR number, with a more laid back commercial feel. Mistreated Heart makes for a great blend of the two styles so far - a big groove and solid hard rock riffs, but lots of keyboards and a big AOR chorus. Mason (The Miracle Boy) retains the hard rock heaviness, but is another very accessible melodic rocker with another strong chorus and some serious guitar work.

Walk On The Rainbow walks that heavier path as the opening songs of the album did, while Only One Reason and Call My Name feature great choruses and a certain commercial flair. Reason features a ton of keyboards surrounded by some big riffs while Name is all riffs! Wonderland closes the album with one of the heaviest and hardest hitting tracks of the album, with a double kick drum rhythm pounding furiously along with some swirling keyboards.

A very solid debut and a very enjoyable slice of European melodic hard rock, with enough memorable songs to bring the listener back for more. Best part I think is the fact the album has that big band sound, yet there are only 2 guys responsible. Terrific performances all-round and an album definitely worth checking out for fans of straight head guitar driven hard rock.

Date: 23/5 - 2005

AOR Dream Zones: *Johnny Forslund*

75 (100)

This release from the Swedish band Stonelake came as a nice surprise right from the sky. The two guys behind the band (Peter Grundström vocals & Jan Åkesson guitar, bass, keyboard) have a big reputation in different bands and after 15 years they decided to play together again. After a good meal, a few beers and some whiskey the interest grew to form a project once again. The result of this was and still is Stonelake.

As I sad earlier this CD is nothing else than a happy surprise and it is nice to get an album in my hands without any major record company or small for instance that have been writing too many big words about a release without living up to it. That is happening to often these days, as long as we have got ears we can see through the cards, so why not be more honest or at least sign bands that they can stand for. However Stonelake knows how to do it and this is how it should be done. A great album filled with passion and melodies over the average.

It's hard to decide if this is hard rock, aor or prog music, but let's say like this. Hard rock with an attitude and behind of it all a wall filled with aor, flavored with keyboards and put some progressive variations on top of that, very bombastic and powerful sound. This is quite aggressive and has few softer moments. The vocals are very very sharp and the guitars are roaring like a monster in some of the songs, but I can't figure out if the drums are for real all the way throughout the album and that suspiciousness lowers the score a bit and so does a couple of the tracks as well. This could easily have been a disc done by an American band, it got the same feeling over it, straight from a dirty scene or a dusty basement in Los Angeles somewhere. If you liked Dokken, Skidrow and other bands in the same vein this must be something for you. The two tracks "You Strike Me With Love" and "Saint Or Evil" are pure dynamite songs and the album ends with "Tsunami" in memory for the victims in Asia.



TRACKLIST:

01. Reincarnation
02. You Strike Me With Love
03. Saint Or Evil
04. All I Need
05. Mistreated Heart
06. Manson (The Miracle Boy)
07. Walk On The Rainbow
08. Only One Reason
09. Call My Name
10. Wonderland
11. Tsunami (In Memoriam)