

# VOODOO CIRCLE

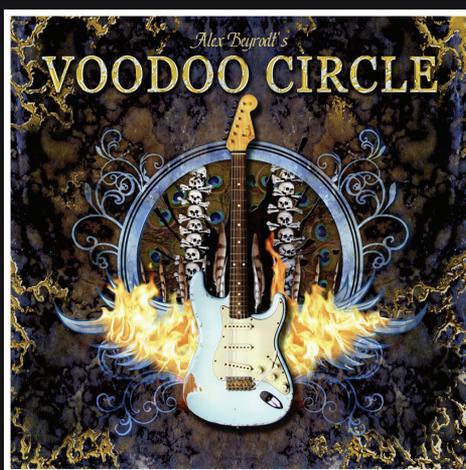
## “Voodoo Circle”

Voodoo Circle, or Alex Beyrod's Voodoo Circle to give it its full title, is the latest project release from the ever busy German guitarist. Perhaps best known for his time with Sinner, or more recently through his live work with Primal Fear, Alex has also been an intrinsic part of a couple of excellent side projects – namely The Sygnet with then Jaded Heart front man Michael Bormann, and Silent Force with erstwhile Royal Hunt vocalist DC Cooper, the latter of which still seems to be very much a going concern.

Assembling something of a stellar line up, Voodoo Circle sees Alex throwing in his lot with Pink Cream 69 vocalist David Readman, Sinner/Primal Fear bassist Mat Sinner, keyboard player Jimmy Kresic, and drummer Mel Gaynor (who has played with the likes of Brian May and Gary Moore amongst others). Add to that a rather select guest list which includes Doogie White, Rudi Sarzo, Richard Anderssen (Majestic, Time Requiem, Space Odyssey), and Norifumi Shima (Concerto Moon) – not to mention the services of Dennis Ward behind the mixing desk - and you have a sure fire recipe for success by anyone's standards! Well, on paper at least...

Fortunately, as those given a taster at last year's Firefest (via the inclusion of “Kingdom Of The Blind” at the end of David Readman's blistering set) will testify, the anticipation has definitely been worth the wait. As soon as the brooding intro fades away and opener

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“Spewing Lies” kicks in on the back of some monster riffing, you just know that you're in for something really tasty, and rarely does this stunning release even come close to disappointing! Yep, if you're familiar with Beyrod's earlier works on The Sygnet and Silent Force, Voodoo Circle will seem like manna from heaven – indeed, I'd

even go as far as to say it was the best of the lot, such is the magic spell these songs weave from beginning to end.

Not a million miles from the statesman like sound of latter day Silent Force, what really distinguishes Voodoo Circle is the wonderfully Rainbowsque neo-classical vibe which courses through its veins. As an old school (read Dio) era Rainbow fan of many years standing, I can appreciate the efforts of anyone attempting to emulate that particularly illustrious era; and I can tell you now, few have done it with such style as Voodoo Circle. Yet, whilst the ghost of Rainbow past makes its presence felt at every single turn, this is no mere homage to things past. Quite the opposite really as it drags that evocative sound kicking and screaming into the 21st Century – Rainbow meets Time Requiem anyone?!

As for the songs themselves... hmmm, where to start? I've already made mention of two real firecrackers in “Spewing Lies” and “Kingdom Of The Blind”, but trust me, this release is absolutely jam packed full of 'em! “Man & Machine”, “Desperate Heart”, “Master Of Illusion”, “We'll Never Learn”... I could go on, but these tracks alone make it this month's 'must have' release for me.

Here's hoping that this is just the beginning of something very special indeed... in a word, brilliant!

POWERPOINTS: **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

**DAVE COCKETT**



# ALBUM OF THE MONTH!

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