

Saris - Ghosts Of Yesterday



Country of Origin: Germany

Year of Release: 2017

Time: 67:22

Links: [Info](#)

[Samples](#)

Track List:

Masquerade (5:12), *Shadows Of War* (6:13), *Ghosts Of Yesterday* (4:38), *Autumn Sky* (6:11), *Twilight* (11:14), *Mysterious Place* (5:11), *Evermore* (4:34), *Change My Yesterday* (6:55), *Crying In The Rain* (4:11), *Grace Of Time* (6:58), *Lost In The City* (6:05).

This is the fourth and latest album from German progressive rock band, Saris and comes three years after their 2014 album *Till We Have Faces*. I must confess to not having heard Saris before, however I am impressed by what I hear by a band that is clearly influenced by the more melodic spectrum of progressive rock, with bands like **Magnum** springing to mind. I also like that they are not afraid to create longer songs that give the opportunity for their compositions to grow and emerge, flex and change as they unfold. Several of these pieces change their direction as they are played.

What sets Saris apart is the use of two very different vocal approaches, namely a strong, assured male vocal, ably backed with a good female singer. Together they harmonise and personalise these songs to great effect, something that is aided by the fact that they have very clear voices which make the songs come alive. The band are all very accomplished musicians and deliver some great performances. Special mention must go to main man Derk Akkerman, whose guitar and keyboard work is very fine throughout, as is the great sounding bass of Lutz Guther and the fine drumming of Jess Backmann. Taken together these guys create a fabulous sounding album, that has a great production and very strong dynamic.

The album is comprised of 11 tracks that speak of the unresolved, deep-seated issues that people live with on a daily basis. The dragon serves as an effigy of memories from the past that linger as a mental load like *The Ghosts Of Yesterday* (hence the album's title). It is a bold and different concept to work from, and it gives the songs a cohesive thread to follow.

The opener *Masquerade* is a case in point. This is a great opener, showcasing the skills of Akkerman who sets the scene with some great keyboard soundscapes, sounding rather like **Dream Theater** at times. It's not prog metal though.

Also worthy of note are the very impressive and different vocal arrangements on *Shadows Of War*, where the voice of Henrik Wager is tracked by that of Anja Guther to great effect. This is also the case on *Autumn Sky*.

The longest piece on here is *Twilight*. It's nothing to do with those vampire movies from a few years back, rather this is a track that takes its time to develop, opening with a very tasty guitar line before more orchestral type keyboards are introduced. The steady, rumbling bass lays down a solid foundation for the song to spring from over its running time of eleven minutes. This is a track that improves with every fresh listen.

I had discounted *Mysterious Place* as being more run-of-the-mill, but further listenings reveal it to be a good and solid track with some great musical ideas being expressed throughout; On *Evermore* Anja Gunther gets her chance to shine, with her expressive yet emotive vocals. This is a lighter piece and very welcome, and with a decent piano solo at the three minute mark.

In fact the more I hear this, the more I like it. Some albums creep up on you and then unfold their treasures unexpectedly. This is a good album, and most progressive rock fans will find much to enjoy here.

[▶ show video](#)

Conclusions:

John Wenlock-Smith: 8 out of 10