

# Double Album Review: Geof Whitely Project – Supernatural Casualty [and] Circus of Horrors

**[AUG 18](#)**

Posted by [ChristopherMammal](#)



**Location:** Staffordshire, England

**Genre:** Prog-related Rock

**Release dates:** Supernatural Casualty, 3 August 2015; Circus of Horrors, 31 October 2015

**Label:** Self-released

**Previous releases:** An album every few months during the last four years, no kidding

**Mammal's rating: 4.25 out of 5 (both albums)**

I haven't previously reviewed two albums by one artist for a single post on Metal State. But then, not many artists release albums as rapidly as Geof Whitely does. He is one of the most prolific composers and recording artists in any type of modern music.

There could be big risks in writing as much music as he does. There's the obvious risk of saturating the market to the extent that individual album sales might suffer. The more insidious risk is that the compositions will start to fall flat.

From the Geof Whitely Project fan site there's no indication that the followers are feeling overloaded with his music. And after listening thoroughly to both of the newest albums, I can report that there's complete consistency in the quality and variety of the compositions and arrangements of the songs. The man is a serial progger who seems to get better every time he surrenders to his compulsion.

There is a fair amount of sameness in the two albums. That's perfectly fine. The Whitely approach works well. It builds confidence among fans that every new release will be as satisfying as the previous one.

I happened on "Supernatural Casualty" serendipitously while browsing through new and current prog releases at the beginning of this month. The description of the album caught my interest: "Electronic, Prog Rock, Instrumental, Classic Rock." Might it be Krautrock in the vein of Kraftwerk, a modern take on the proggy rock of Kansas or early Electric Light Orchestra, or some variation of psychedelic and space rock? Or, aargh, some dance or trance mish-mash pushing itself under the guise of "prog" and "classic"?

It's none of those. It doesn't follow any set rules for any of those genres. The album is a very mixed selection of songs that Geof enjoyed writing and recording. The over-riding form of the music is prog rock, but some of the songs take the form of classic rock ballads, and others feel like the best of modern melodic rock.

"Supernatural Casualty" impressed me so much that I made contact with Geof to tell him how much I enjoyed the album, which was released early this month. He invited me to try "Circus of Horrors", set for release at the end of October. It's just as impressive, and in a different way. There is romance as well as tastes of bitterness on "Supernatural Casualty". Thematically, "Circus of Horrors" bites more deeply. The Circus is a metaphor for life in the modern world, where we humans seem dead-set on destruction of so many good things.



Geof Whitely with the artwork for one of his many previous albums.

Geof's musical Project started four years ago. He features guest performances by various musicians. By and large, though, the Project is pretty much Mister Whitely doing everything.

He wrote to me as Arny Whitely. I wondered what the relation was between Arny and Geof. I found an answer elsewhere – one day the postman delivered an envelope addressed to Geof Whitely, and that tickled Arny so much that he decided to make records as Geof. That makes perfectly logical sense to me. In certain circumstances my special cat, Tiny Tiny Cakey Kitten, performs some actions better under the name of Pure Tenaga.

Geof says his guiding philosophy is to create music in all types of formats, including prog rock, rock, pop, electronic and instrumental. He adds: "Everyone these days wants to sound like Marillion, Genesis etc, but it's been done. I just seem to write in my own way and hopefully have my own sound and style."

I asked him what prompted his choice of secret weapon, the saxophone. The mellowness that flows through both albums in spite of the harder lyrical content in some songs owes much to Geof's thoughtful inclusion of sax. His reply was uncomplicated: "I love the saxophone and wanted to be different when making catchy links in the songs." In fact his entire approach is based hugely on keeping the compositions uncomplicated. While there are certainly the expected prog "fiddly bits", the music is always accessible to a range of listeners because it never becomes over-intricate and doesn't bog down in any particular genre or style.

I also asked if Greg Lake of Emerson, Lake and Palmer was the project's secret vocalist. I thought Geof's voice was somewhat similar in tone and timbre to the voice of Greg Lake in ELP ballads such as the magnificent "C'est La Vie".

The stand-out song for me on "Supernatural" is the first track, "Assassin", for the way it blends the best of classic prog and neo-prog. The song that moved me the most on "Circus of Horrors" is also its first track, "The Hunted". I live in South Africa. Almost every day we despair at the news of yet another butchering by rhino poachers. "The Hunted" reflects dismay at the needless slaughter of wildlife.

I strongly recommend both albums to proggers and rockers who enjoy chilling out to smooth, mellow, sensitive, intelligent songs. I'd also urge you to delve into Geof Whitely's considerable discography.

Get better acquainted with Geof Whitely Project on [Facebook](#).