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### Oakley, Paul: Out Of The Ashes

There is a wealth of instrumental guitarist out there. Some get it right and many, many never do. It takes much more than the ability to shred or run the fretboard as fast as humanly possible to create music that gets into your soul. So many forget that this it is still about the melody and not a solo extended out for 3 or 4 minutes. When the artist gets it right it is as if a magical landscape explodes in your head from the sounds that are being sent there through your ears. Music can be a medium that makes you use more than your audio senses. It can make you look at things differently. It can touch you in ways nothing else can. When the artist is spot on with his instrument there is nothing in this world that will affect you in the same way.



All that is to prepare you for the dynamics of an artist I have never had the pleasure of hearing before but have found to be a guy that can depict the world we live in and the feelings that we have through the interpretation of his surroundings and his dreams using his six string. The pen might be mightier than the sword but Paul Oakley proves that the guitar can be mightier than any writing instrument known to man at creating a story or painting a picture. Here on this disc he gives you 11 interpretations of things going on in his life and our lives as well. From the melodramatic to the whimsical, Oakley delivers an instrumental tour de force.

Paul tells me that his first influence was Ritchie Blackmore and after that Gary Moore and David Gilmour. I guess you could say the "more" the merrier no matter how you spell it. He also mentioned that Uli Jon Roth and Jan Cyrka among his favorite guitarist too. While I hate to really compare Paul as he has a very unique sound but he reminds me more of the Joe Satriani, Gary Hoey and Rod DeGeorge school where the music is more about melody and painting vivid pictures with his playing. This album is not about riffs, it is about storytelling and the ability to create a tale with his music.

Take the first song "One Last Ride" that is as he describes it about selling his motorcycle and taking it out for the last time. When you hear the sound of the bike being fired up at the start it is just a prelude to a song that takes you out on the highway for a breathtaking ride. You can close your eyes and just envision the miles flying by as the music takes you for a two wheeled ride of a lifetime. You can feel the wind as he cranks the throttle and blazes off into the sunset.

From there he takes you to the whimsical world that cats live in with "Cattitude". As far as pets go, cats are the ones that have the most attitude and this tune captures it perfectly. This song shows the way that Paul paints with his music as you can just see a cat rolling around with a ball of yarn or batting the mouse toy.

This journey that Oakley takes you on is one that hits upon many different emotions along the way. The beautiful "Hand In Hand" really exudes love while the song "Out Of The Ashes" is full of hope. "Freefall" is all about excitement and you will have a deep respect for history and the finality of death with the majestic "The Last Pharaoh". Oakley is able to pull such feelings from his instrument. Luckily we are here to benefit from his ability.

It is not often you will find an artist of such extreme talent. Both in his playing and his songwriting, Oakley is superb. By the time you get to the last song "Final Sunset" you will be drained by the pure magic that he has put on this disc.

If I have any criticism at all it would have to be the booklet that comes with the CD. May I suggest, listen to this a few times before opening it up as Paul gives you a description of what the songs were written about. This does keep me from asking the question of him about the meanings but I also found that it made me think of the songs through his eyes. It is kind of like knowing the whole plot to a movie before seeing it. Maybe it is just me but I like to listen and then try to figure out what the artist is trying to say.

This is what instrumental music is supposed to be, something that you feel as well as hear. Few can pull it off but Paul Oakley does and what he has put out for you is one magical disc that gets into the soul. This is one that you should not just own but treasure for not many will come along like it.

#### Track listing:

1. One Last Ride
2. Cattitude
3. Hand In Hand
4. Out Of The Ashes
5. Freefall
6. The Last Pharaoh
7. Always
8. Driving Me Crazy
9. Race Against Time
10. Always(Reprise)
11. Final Sunset

**Added:** September 22nd 2010  
**Reviewer:** Scott Ward  
**Score:** ★★★★★  
**Related Link:** Paul's Official Site  
**Hits:** 75  
**Language:** english

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