

Sea of Tranquility (US)

1968 is the latest release from German hard rock/prog act Flying Circus, somewhat of a concept albums as each of the songs deal with specific world events that happened in the year 1968. The band are comprised of Michael Dorp (lead vocals), Michael Rick (guitars), Rudiger Blomer (keyboards, violin), Roger Weitz (bass), and Ande Roderigo (drums). 1968 was recorded at the famous Dierks Studios, and engineered by Wulf-Hanses-Ketteler. The band have now been in existence for 30 years and have a handful of albums to their credit.

If you follow along with the timeline, events such as the Martin Luther King assassination, University of Paris riots, conflict in the South Vietnam town of My Lai, the Prague Spring, and other notable world events are covered here by the band, the arrangements a mix atmospheric prog rock saturated with smoldering Hammond B3 organ, piano, synths, and violin, with more muscular guitar driven hard rock. "The Hopes We Had (In 1968)" is one of the easy highlights here, a wealth of keyboards & violin supporting some strong hooks and a blistering guitar solo, while the crunchy "Vienna" offers up some funky Clavinet alongside some massive riff-o-rama. Then there's the heavy rocking "Berlin", Rick laying down some impressive guitar thunder and Dorp singing up a storm, as well as the groove laden & catchy "Paris".

An impressive album from Flying Circus, a band I'd not had the pleasure of hearing their music until now but I certainly am interested in hearing their back catalog after checking out this latest release. (Pete Pardo)

Powerplay (UK)

This is a concept record about the year 1968 and a number of events that occurred throughout the year pulled together by a progressive-minded German five-piece. As concepts go, it's an interesting one. 'New York', for instance, deals with Valerie Solana's attempt to assassinate Andy Warhol, whereas 'Prague' deals with the Warsaw Pact countries' invasion of Czechoslovakia, officially known as Operation Danube. Musically encased in a progressive, jazz rock ensemble, '1968' is a surprisingly enjoyable listen (on paper it looked anything but!) but the epic instrumental 'Berlin' is a brilliantly effective track. Likewise 'Memphis' (about Martin Luther King's assassination) is a wonderfully assembled piece of music. Definitely worth adding this to your wants list.

The Metal Mag (FR)

I was sceptical when I received this CD ! Are they musicians missing the early years of their teens like most French people do? After few listen and looking at the booklet I was changing my mind, this album is much a way to re-write history for the new kids. Basically it is a way to write music about what was made in the world in 1968. A beautiful item for collection.

Digipack version with a strong booklet with the lyrics and few photos of the band members. I must say it is a bit hard to get right into it. The music is changing so much from each song. Each song has the name of a country or a town. The first song is called Paris and so is about what happened with the revolution of students back then. There is a French sentence to give a little taint to it.

The band started in late eighties and gathered fans with around six albums to date, like many they had line up changes. It doesn't matter if you know the band from their first album or not. This new album is kind of exceptional and pretty different from the masses. Many music styles, pretty hard to set Flying Circus in a box. With this album the band is touching people from different ages as they have many instruments such as violin or even wind instruments.

A strong jazz sound mixed with progressive vibes, the album will gain lots of fans with a lot of different cultures. It opens a wide window to the world. Music is made for this and we can tell the

band has reached easily. Great musicians and composers, the main idea was pretty good and went to something much complex and expressive with the music. A very interesting album to dig in and appreciate with time. They really wanted to capture the essence of the time.

A flashy cover with rainbows and flowers, the title tracks written like an LP with two sides. A vocalist Michael Dorp with a melty melodic voice to get your soul addicted. Lots of feelings from those sixties years. You will find yourself taken away if you really love music! If you want to fly away and discover a great band with art, I advise you to buy this album. A concentrated album with music from diverse time and places giving you the wish to follow this band.

Influences ranging from : MC5, Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Alannah Myles, Yes.. An amazing team of great musicians can only bring you brilliant tunes. Remember to never let your first impression leading you, listen to and love Flying Circus. Appreciate the great musicians who made a brilliant work

Eternal Terror (NO)

The German outfit Flying Circus is an interesting one and has released a number of critically acclaimed records in the past that merge progressive rock and bombastic hard rock to great effect. Luckily, this latest endeavor of theirs evocatively entitled "1968" is no different and is a warm and entertaining slab of otherworldly rock with touches of psychedelia and avantgarde to it.

There is a red thread coursing through it all and despite the somewhat challenging nature of some of the tunes, they are actually pretty damn catchy and even borderline infectious at times. This is perfectly exemplified by the opening track, "Paris", where there is a strangely funky vibe in play and yet it sounds like Fairport Convention and The Crazy World of Arthur Brown tripping on some hitherto unknown substance that causes extremely surreal trips to the odd corners of the mind. Intrigued? Well, you should be. You get raunchy riffs and splendid vocal melodies with grit to them on the one hand and some musically interesting experiments on the other that add color and a sense of the unpredictable to the proceedings. Another stellar tune is "New York" – in large part due to the great vocals – and this one nicely illustrates that it is in fact possible to make a tasty cocktail consisting of memorable hard rock, early Pink Floyd-esque prog vibes, and a solid dose of weird textures that will make you believe that you are actually floating in space. The lyrics all revolve around historic events in cities such as Memphis, Vienna, and Berlin (just to list a few examples). Not every composition is flawless and some of the more left-field ideas do not always pan out in a satisfying manner, which is merely another way of saying that there are times when the ensemble is sort of plodding along and meandering through the pieces. The low points are the superfluous "Mö Lai" and "Vienna", but the aforementioned "Paris" and "New York" as well as the hazy and melancholic "Prague" are brilliant with the latter arguably being the most adventurous of the bunch. Generally, there are some fabulous pieces to immerse oneself in here and very little filler stuff.

Strange, wonderful, and with an intuitive feel and strong hooks to it, "1968" elegantly weaves a compelling musical web and is a vivid and refreshing listen.

Progplanet (CY)

I will be honest and admit that I was previously unaware of this fine German band and their past substantial discography. Anyhow, probably because I was fully aware of the impact that the German 'Dark Metal' band Bethlehem' have in the North Rhine region of Westphalia, I was unsure of what to expect from 'Flying Circus' a band from the same geographical area. However, from the very first play there was something very warm and familiar about 'Flying Circus'. Yes, for me, a kind of journey back in time to the wonderful early days of Kraut Rock' and bands such as 'Birth Control' and other cult German progressive rock band from the 1970s. In fact, as I discovered

here, 'Flying Circus' comprise an abundance of delightfully melodic musicianship, superb arrangements and fine vocals all produced in 'Neo Kraut Rock' style.

Generally, there is so much movement to the music driven by some powerful bass and excellent drumming throughout, especially the composite 'Latin American' inflections so cleverly integrated into the scores. But what really sparks the compositional mood to fever pitch and creates an extra special atmosphere to the proceedings, are the numerous, but not nearly enough violin contributions. Particularly noticeable is the huge variety of ideas and different arrangements incorporated throughout the ten tracks without much in the way of repetition. Layers of tasty keyboards comprising classical piano, organ and synthesiser all act together like the glue holding everything in place and rather like an artist's canvas allow oodles of freedom for the guitar to sing a sway separately in both lead and rhythm capacities.

The lead vocals are commanding and stylish and delivered with much aplomb. Such a range of vocal capabilities is amply demonstrated throughout the entire programme of tracks but more particularly revealed with the more ballad styled track entitled 'Memphis'. The subtle backing vocals, although not over utilised are, where incorporated, excellent too.

Summary: A superb album from a very talented group of musicians. Beautifully arranged and coordinated instrumentation and excellent vocals throughout. Although with a modern feel the music definitely recreates memories of the golden age of Krautrock and the wonderful German bands of that period. A solid addition to any progressive rock music collection

Über R6ck (UK)

German quintet Flying Circus unashamedly seek to evoke the spirit of the year which gives this, their latest album, its title, both musically and thematically. While not a concept album in the purest form of the word, each of the nine (and a bit) songs is linked by an event which happened in 1968, hence titles such as 'New York' and 'Memphis', both of which address the assassination of Martin Luther King, 'Derry' (the birth of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement and the subsequent four-decade long 'Troubles') and 'Mĩ Lai' (the infamous massacre of South Vietnamese civilians by US troops which heavily fuelled calls for America to withdraw from the conflict on the archipelago).

Musically speaking, '1968' also fully evokes the era in which it is both rooted and seeks to recreate, doing the latter with aplomb and deft retro panache, combining elements of 'flower-power'-era psychedelia with power-blues-fuelled classic rock and the nascent prog meanderings of the likes of early Pink Floyd, Yes and Gong. While there is plenty going on, especially in terms of layering and thematic development, it's also in no way over-complicated – or boring, as so many modern-day prog albums, and especially those seeking to evoke a retro feel, can drag on the ear and lead you to look for distractions.

Cleverly, the band also make no judgement on the events referenced in the songs: they merely relate the events and their impact in subtle ways which are neither confrontational nor divisive. 'Derry', for example (a track I was particularly interested in, for obvious reasons), is a neat little instrumental violin piece (later echoed on the beautiful and powerful 'Mĩ Lai'), mournful yet vigorous and all the more appealing for its paucity: there's certainly no John Lennon or Paul Hewson-style politicization, and that is to be welcomed. The only exception to this rule, perhaps, is the pivotal central track, 'The Hopes We Had (In 1968)', which manages to combine the optimism of the period with a sense of mournful regret at how the year actually evolved: in fact, it could be said that it is something of a mirror for the times in which we now find ourselves.

Despite having grown up listening to the likes of Floyd, Tull and especially Yes (I could never get into Genesis, in any of their incarnations), and then later prog revivalists such as It Bites, Marillion and the criminally-underrated Pendragon, I had lost faith in prog as a genre, finding it all a bit too samey and up-its-own-arse when placed in the hands of the likes of Devin Townsend and Steven Wilson. However, Flying Circus have helped to reinvigorate my faith in it as an artform capable of being challenging and entertaining in equal measure, especially when delivered with such compassion and erudition.

Metal to Infinity (BE)

Review by Officer Nice: I know an album that has the title "1987", now I know another one that listens to the name "1968". I wasn't even born that year... But, I need to admit it, it was the era of a generation that re-invented music and the era when Hard Rock saw the first lights of day. It was an interesting period, certainly in music. Last week I bought an old Led Zeppelin album, from 1969, a magnificent album and another piece of art that makes me proud I was born in that specific era..

Anyway, the band here is called Flying Circus and these guys are for sure inspired by the old generation of (Hard) Rock bands. It is no coincidence that this music reminds me to hippies, to Charles Manson and to the images of the very first Woodstock Festival. I makes me think to The Doors, Led Zeppelin and many more memorable things from the early Seventies. I suppose fans of Greta Van Fleet can live with this album too, even Pavlov's Dog fans should be interested. And now we're playing the game of similar sounding bands I can add Pink Floyd as well.

Overall this was a very nice musical experience from this German band. This is the fifth album of the band, as far as I can see. It is a concept album with high appreciated musical arrangements. It's very obvious some high qualified musicians are at work here. These guys know how to write a good song and how to add progressive tunes into them. Great keyboards, fantastic intense guitars, subtle drums and a very, really very good singer. This music holds something special but needs it's time. This is not a regular Metal album, this is Rock, Hard Rock, Seventies Rock that is played by old school Rockers. I would love to see this band live... maybe when this COVID-19 shit is over!

This is one I didn't see coming and one that I really appreciated. The smooth atmosphere, I really adore it and this album works on my imagination, just the way I like my music to sound! I need to find out more about this band, really! Fans of all the bands I mentioned before really should purchase this one.

The Rocker (UK)

Much to everyones surprise I'm too young to remember 1968. Well, that's not strictly true as I think I remember my Granda feeding me strawberries on a train back fae West Calder. But I'm told I would have been too young so it might be a false memory.

Anyway, I'm pretty sure 1968 was nothing like this. My Granda had been medically retired fae the pit, my Da was working construction 250 miles to the North of where we stayed and my Mither was heading for her third nervous breakdown. I was living with my Great Auntie Euphemia and Great Uncle George. But out there in the world, apparently there was stuff like the Martin Luther King assassination, the Paris riots, the Vietnam war and a whole host of other stuff that nobody around me cared about.

But German progsters Flying Circus have decided to base their latest release around world events from 1968. So, sort of a concept album without being an actual concept album. Oh, and when I say prog I really mean Lucifers Friend / Uriah Heep styled rocking prog with Family type vocals, not the noodly stuff. Although there is a Curved Air style violin.

So there's tons of Hammond organ (hurrah!), plenty of hard driving riffs ans some complex shenanigans to justify the proggish tag. It's one of those records that actually deserves to be listened to from beginning to end as there is a flow to things. Although the brief violin instrumental 'Derry' could easily have been dropped as it's the one thing that puts a brake on the flow. And as I say that as the offspring of Irish grandparents and beyond.

If I was pushed to pick favourites I'd go for 'Prague' and 'Vienna' but this is a record that deserves to be heard properly. And widely. Go get yourself some.

Full Circle Music Blog (BE)

I'm glad to present you a most impressive album. German retro-rock band Flying Circus creates a cross-over between classic krautrock, contemporary progressive rock and a dash of artrock. '1968' is a thematic album dealing with important events during that year in different cities (Paris, Prague, Berlin, Derry, New York, Mî Lai, Vienna, Memphis). The sound of the band and especially singer Michael Dorp reminds of legendary krautband Birth Control, but the sonic universum and musical vocabulary is much richer through the use of violin and the twists and turns in the compositions. To record this album, the band returned to the historic Dierks Studios in Stommeln near Cologne. The spirit of the great days of the past still wades there, this album is the proof. By listening to the complete album one realises that the tag 'retro-rock' becomes irrelevant. There's a musical variation and diversity that lifts the band way above a nostalgic trip. This is an album to take your time for, sit down for and listen to ... and listen again. Everytime there's something new to discover. (Geert Ryssen)

Metal Centre (PL)

FLYING CIRCUS was founded in Grevenbroich (Germany) in 1990. The band has released a total of 7 albums and have gone through various lineup changes. The musicians draw their inspiration from the rich world of Progressive Rock and Hrad Rock. Their last album "1968" is a concept album that touches on many events from the title year.

Of course there is no doubt here. The album is intended for connoisseurs of mature progressive playing, in which the richness of musical themes goes hand in hand with the virtuoso approach to the matter (which is ensured by each of the band's musicians).

The music is very developmental and changeable (in the arrangement sense). The main role is played by classic-Rock instrumentation (along with keyboards), which is rich in various sounds and diversified dynamics of composition . This instrumental classicism is complemented by sounds of less conventional in Rock music and instruments (like flute or violin), which clearly affects to the mood of the songs.

The atmosphere created by the musicians is also very changeable. We will hear stronger, even Hard Rock beats, dynamic and fast moments or typical Rock motifs or foreign to Rock themes, e.g. in the style of American Country or Folk melodies, even with an Irish or Far Eastern shade. And the atmosphere extends from psychedelic breaths, through dark and massive motifs or calmer, melancholic accents to virtuoso multi-threaded encounters.

Well, with such rich music you can hear a lot of influences and similarities, both arrangement and vocal, even to RUSH, YES or LED ZEPPELIN but also to PINK FLOYD or THE MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA... and many others...

Listening to "1968" you could have an impression as if time stopped... musically in the 70s of the twentieth century... And so, that is beautiful!

Hallowed (SE)

Here comes a circus, a high flying one that takes us back to 1968, over fifty years now to a time when the guys in the band were young. Something like that. The cover looks quite sixties and the tracks tells stories about events in that years through the places in the titles. A pretty interesting idea for a concept and could mean that the German quintet has some fresh ideas. So, what about it; is it just the sixties music copied or is it a band that does something of their own?

Progressive rock with a strong sense of melodies and some distinct sense of the sixties and seventies, classic yet with a relatively fresh sound. The sound is very good, and it fits the theme really well, the vocalist is good with strong voice and feeling. It is a very strong production, with

strong variation, decent depth and a sensible playing time, they should strike a chord with fans of the progressive rock genre.

1968 is a good album and should certainly be a good choice for the fan of the progressive rock. It offers familiar sounds, but also a fresh feel – they do what they do really well and there isn't anything to complain about. The songs are all good and it starts really well with Paris, but I think the Vietnam story My Lai is my favourite track, it is an excellent track that is a nice hallmark for a fine album.

It is an album that is well worth checking out, Flying Circus has done really well here, and I recommend that you have a closer look at this album. The one who like the progressive rock genre should certainly not miss this one, but I am quite sure it will go down well with anyone who like good music. So, if you want to go back to a time before humans walked on the moon it is an album for the nostalgic one and the one that wants a good musical adventure.

Strutter (NL)

The German band FLYING CIRCUS has been active since 1990 and released quite a lot of albums so far. They are so to speak an established band by now with a sound that is clearly influenced by the 1970s progressive rock sound. Also their new album 1968 reveals similarities to bands like NEKTAR, ELOY, PINK FLOYD, GROBSCHNITT, RUSH and such, so mixing Krautrock, Progrock and a tiny bit of very early SCORPIONS is what this band is all about. I vaguely remember reviewing one of their albums, but starting fresh in 2020 with this new album is a good thing, because the band has delivered a strong concept album that is all about the year 1968. A lot of events happened in this year and the band wrote 10 songs that are mostly named after a city where the event took place in 1968, such as Paris, New York, Prague, Derry, Berlin, etc. The band's line up features Rüdiger Blömer (keys/violin), Michael Dorp (vocals), Michael Rick (guitar), Ande Roderigo (drums) and Roger Weitz (bass), and despite a few songs go for a more experimental direction here and there, the songs that go for that classic melodic progrock sound are showing FLYING CIRCUS at their very best, such as the lovely The hopes we had in 1968 and Berlin (SAGA meets RUSH). Nice new album of FLYING CIRCUS and for more info please go to: <https://www.flying-circus.com/>