

Belew's "Lone Rhino" an electric romp

"The Lone Rhinoceros"
Adrian Belew
Island

What do Brian Eno (producer of Talking Heads), David Byrne (leader of Talking Heads), Robert Fripp (leader of King Crimson) and David Bowie have in common?

One answer is their credibility as music theorists. They are the luminaries of modern rhythmic pop. But

The guitar work is excellent, as anyone would know who has sorted out Belew's awesome contributions on King Crimson, Talking Heads, Tom Tom Club and Zappa records. What is unexpected is Belew's ability on drums (there is a hell of a lot of it) and at songwriting (there are songs that are truly memorable and songs that are truly mesmerizing).

The fault with the album are the songs that fall in

neither memorable or mesmerizing category. These are the Zappa-influenced songs.

Homage is paid to all the teachers, whose influences are understandably lasting. Too much due perhaps is given to Zappa, the odd-ball out of the list. His swarthy silliness would seem to be at odds with the meticulous modulations of the Byrne/Eno/Fripp school - except that Belew does melt them together with surprising effect. Be-

side, it was Zappa who discovered Belew in a lowly cover band and rescued him from a Midwest circuit.

Even those songs aren't as put-offish as they first sound. More pertinently, a song like "Big Electric Cat" is so catchy on first hearing that it justifies the album over the short-run, while a song like "The Lone Rhinoceros" (or "The Momur," "Naive Guitar," etc. justifies it over the short-run.



Album Review

now add Frank Zappa to this constellation of stars and again ask, "What do they have in common?"

The answer is all have used Adrian Belew on their recent albums. As the list of employers indicates, Belew is the guitar virtuoso of the discriminating artist.

As a journeyman, Belew learned his trade from the best and soon could match even Byrne and Fripp lick for lick.

Now, he is a master, a luminary too brilliant to remain in the umbrage of his teachers. In short, he has his first solo album out, "The Lone Rhinoceros." It is fine.

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