

I thought I'd review something a little different this time around. You automatically get a million points if you've even heard of Sonic Winter by the Johansson Brothers. Are the vast majority of the population missing out on something? Well, what does 'something' mean? More than nothing. So yes, most are missing out on SOMETHING. Are they missing out on anything good? No. But to be fair, the material isn't that bad some of the time. Jazz fusion keyboards mixed with heavier guitars and drums are pretty cool, but the lyrics are kind of cheesy. I don't really know why I don't like the singer's voice, I just don't. Sound childish? Well I am. (Almost) everyone involved with this musical project is. Don't know what I'm on about? Read on... Or rather *واصل القراءة ...*

The strangely named instrumental 'Enigma Suite' (does it make you ponder at all? Nope, most will want it to quickly end) features Yngwie Malmsteen as a guest. I always knew he was a wrong'n', in that he has no sense of musical taste whatsoever, but I expected more from the keyboardist. It's as if he said to Yngwie 'I always thought being melodic was good, then you came along. You're really famous right? You must be onto something...' The notoriously arrogant Yngwie probably said something like 'Yes. Less isn't more, more is more. Duh'. Actually, I know he said that to some people as a fact. (As well as him pioneering the now classic (no, really) phrase 'you've unleashed the fury!' - It's even appeared in films). Decades after his solo debut 'Rising Force', people are still playing guitar like athletes with the minds of somewhat hyperactive and angry toddlers; infants with a fondness for turning once dark and mysterious Arabic scales into a warning that something crap is happening already or is about to happen.

It's a shame this album isn't so good, because both Johanssons have collaborated very well with the more mature (so mature he's now dead) guitarist Allan Holdsworth and others. Put simply, Sonic Winter tarnishes Jen's reputation. (Yngwie never truly had one). It's interesting you get instructional DVDs telling you how to play faster, but not slower. In my opinion, such DVDs are desperately needed. They could feature an angry and ultra-macho Russian (because subconsciously others take such people seriously) in military uniform (for added effect) saying phrases such as 'Silence!!' whenever the musicians filmed go even the slightest bit over the top. Very dramatic and it should be, too. Think that idea sounds dumb? Look me in the eye and say it isn't memorable. Yes, like all good education, it sticks in your mind.

Now let's talk about the other Johansson, Anders Johansson. (The drummer). Is there anything to criticise about him? Not really. He's actually very good. Does he play a continues 30 minute drum solo over the other musicians just because he can? He does not. Annoyingly he doesn't seem to be as hardworking and prolific musically as Jens, according to Wikipedia. What is going on in the world of music? I'm not saying Yngwie Malmsteen ruined everything, but he so did. To sum up, this album is kinda stupid in many places. Paradoxically, it is mostly sophisticated in terms of the jazzy and classical harmony but there is no ignoring the crazy soloing. Still though, if you DO know this album, feel free to collect your million points that you can transfer to any game of your choosing. Pretty sweet right? Bye! (Oh, and it gets 5/10. Pretty meh).