

Like musical porridge, Deep Purple's classic album 'Machine Head' is filled with goodness. But is its legendary reputation completely justified? Well first of all, people often say its song 'Smoke of the Water' has the best riff of all time. However, I don't think it does, I think word of mouth got around and people didn't really think too hard about what was said. The question I ask myself is 'why do people think so much of the hook, when there are thousands of ones out there that are more creative and just as catchy?' Because hello? Ever heard of the relatively undiscussed 'Ashes in Your Mouth' by Megadeth? Ok it's a different genre, but you get my point. That question will perhaps be a strange relief for the probably guilty and embarrassed 'composer' Ritchie Blackmore as he almost completely ripped his small repeating pattern off an old jazz song. I actually think 'Black Night' has a better riff. Ok, that was kind of stolen too, but I'm sure Mr. Blackmore has plenty of great stuff that he can be proud of, that's all I'm saying.

Fortunately, I'm certain all the guitar/keyboard solos, etc., are original in the LP. They have to be. Stealing ideas (or 'borrowing them' if you're being kind, though slightly deluded), is common but thieving whole lead parts is blatant fraud. I've never heard of that happening, apart from in cover songs, of course. The mild wigouts are pretty good, too. Again, maybe they don't deserve 'amazing' status, but it's easy to understand why they were thought so highly of at the time. Remember Machine Head was released in 1972, six years before guitarists got good. (I'm referring to the REAL groundbreaking debut album from Van Halen). As 'Head was released eleven years before six-stringers went apes**t (on the first album featuring Yngwie Malmsteen), the leads are performed with at least some taste, however. Yes, yes, yes, another comment criticising Yngwie. Everyone does it, and I have many times on my site, too. On the plus side, he clearly sticks in people's minds with his 'less isn't more, more is more, you f***ing idiot' attitude. (I'm paraphrasing, he did actually say something like that - minus the swear).

Interestingly there appear to be some contradictions in this album. It may just be me being paranoid, but the song 'Lazy' seems to be quite harsh to someone with depression. However, the song 'When a Blind Man Cries' (only added on the 25th anniversary edition) does seem to be understanding. Who do the band think they are, judging who gets sympathy? Do they think they're Gods? Quite possibly. Look at the album cover of 'In Rock'. What's more narcissistic than having someone carve massive statues of your faces from a mountain? A harmless idea? I don't think so. And that album was released decades ago. What are the musician's egos like now, after almost constant praise? Well, on their latest album 'Infinite' (which may or may not be a reference to immortal fame) they have a song called 'On Top of the World'. Smug b*stards. Well maybe they're smug. I didn't actually check out the lyrics of that number for the sake of comedy. They could be totally normal and humble. Back to cover designs, In Rock isn't the only offender; check out the cover of the album in question, 'MH'. The musicians aren't depicted as gigantic monuments but instead as ghostlike, spirit figures. Ok, four of the five band members that played on MH are still alive and proving their immortality, but I'm almost 100% convinced they will all die some day. They are NOT the undead. Most likely.

Hang on... What's with the lyrics 'no one's gonna take my girl, I'm gonna keep her till the end' in the opening track? The end of what? Time? No! You ARE humans! You may find this hard to believe, but there's an interview with Ritchie Blackmore on

Youtube where he claims he spoke to Mozart, even though he was deceased. Apparently he 'didn't look well', though. Still though, he's still supernatural which is pretty cool. Or was the guitarist lying? Of course he was, that was my point all along now that I think of it. The band are full of s**t in pretty much every way, basically. At the end of the day, does all that matter, though? Why not just enjoy the music? Sure the lyrics are pretty dumb; even infants know that you can't set fire to water, instead you actually put flames out with the stuff, but the album IS a lot of fun. So I think a respectable 9/10 is fitting. Bye!