

PROGRESSIVE ARCHIVES

Charlestown

Manning Eclectic Prog

Review by [kev rowland](#)

Prog Reviewer

★★★★☆ Sticking to his normal routine, just a year after 'Number Ten' we get number eleven from Guy, 'Charlestown'. Interestingly, although this has been recorded in yet another short time period from the previous album, here only one person (Kev Currie) has been retained. But of course, with a multi-instrumentalist at the helm there isn't a major change in musical direction. This time Guy kicks off with an epic, a 35 minute piece about a sailor lost at sea. The guitar and flute interplay within this song is masterful, really breathing life and vitality into it, but the drumming seems somewhat flat and instead of driving the song along is instead dragging it down so that it isn't nearly as effective as one would expect it to be. The sax is used sparingly, so when it appears it has great impact, and there is a warmth coming from the bass, but there are times when it just feels that there is something missing and that is probably the impact (or lack thereof) of the percussion.

After the power of the opening number, we are treated to something far more delicate in "Caliban and Ariel" where Guy has just gentle piano and cello as the song develops. One of my personal favourites is "Man In The Mirror", which is more upbeat with some great sax, while there is no doubt that closer "Finale" is one of the most intricate and powerful instrumentals he has undertaken. Overall this is a very solid album, just not with the power of 'Number Ten'. www.guymanning.com