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**Damanek - 2018 - "In Flight"**

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(61:23; Giant Electric Pea)

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I'm not sure how long I have been reviewing music from Guy Manning (lead vocals, multi-instrumentalist), and his multiple bands and projects, but let's say twenty years and leave it at that. I am hard pressed to think of a single album he has been involved in for which I have provided a poor review, and I am certainly not going to start now with the second album from Damanek. Over the last few years I have also become quite involved with Marek Arnold (sax and SeaBoard) and have been fortunate to hear many of the albums he has been involved with. He is also responsible for the song I have probably played most in 2018, "Stay" from The Artwork Project. The other musicians in the band are Dan Marsh (bass, Maschine) and Sean Timms (keyboards, guitar, Unitopia), plus quite a few guests. Looking at the PA charts for 2018, I can see that this album is currently in the Top Ten, and I am more than a little surprised that it's not closer to the top slot, as this is progressive rock at its very finest. Guy will always sound similar to Ian Anderson or Roy Harper, but neither of them had a band sounding as powerful as this. This is bombastic over the top symphonic progressive rock, with all those words being delivered in spades. Complex, complicated, with nuances here and there (such as a gently strummed acoustic, or additional percussion), it may be the electric guitar taking the lead, or Marek taking control with a saxophone in the way only he can within this style of music, while Guy strides across it all. Although the music is deep and dark, it is also immediately accessible, with hidden layers awaiting discovery which only start to make themselves known after the third or fourth time of playing. Some people have referred to Damanek as a "supergroup", and certainly on the basis of this they are indeed a super group, with a super album. It even contains a three-part epic which is thirty minutes in length, who could wish for more? This is a stunning release, and one that should be on everyone's Christmas lists if they don't already own it.

**[Kev Rowland](#)**: *November 2018*