

XX

By

Phil Vincent

Written by

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My interest in rock music spans back more decades than I care to reveal, however it gladdens me greatly that while my favourite artists are all shifting from this mortal coil, many new bands and singers are coming up through the ranks. More importantly due to this amazing new era of technology, artists like **Phil Vincent** are now getting heard by many, many more ears around this beautiful planet. Vincent has been plying his trade however for a while now, since the release of his first album (*Rising*) back in 1996, since then he has just continually stepped forward with his melodic, but hard hitting rock attitude.

That theme doesn't change with this new offering entitled **XX**, so called, as this is Phil's twentieth solo album. After being in the business for twenty years, now we can step aboard the rock train of Vincent's life, and enjoy this voyage through a brand new offering.

We start that sojourn with the opening piece called **Live Again**. With most, if not all of Vincent's compositions, nothing is held back and on this one there is a little 1980's Rainbow ethic built in, but the intensity of the lyrics really drives the narrative hard and very fast.

Headlines is a beast of a different lair, the song almost crawls out of the darkness and jumps right up into your face and leaves the master singer Vincent, to draw a compelling and forceful narrative. The percussion in this particular track is sublime and well matched with a plunging bass and a lead guitar wrapping a cloak of power around the whole song. **Headlines** is a track that takes no prisoners.

Next up is a piece called **No Hard Feelings**, the expression of loves tangled weave is explored further; there is an element of regret and musical retrospectivity here that needs to be paid attention to. Rock wise it hits the spot in a more melodic nature, and of course a rather screaming guitar solo imbedded as well.

All For Nothing was one of my favourites from the album, the nature of this realm was delightfully fresh, and towards the latter half of the piece Vincent employs a few techniques I've not heard, to almost create a little ambience before driving off into a powerhouse sunset.

Music is cathartic, and this album of reflection certainly seems to have been for the artist. **Who Are You?** is now upon us and a totally different style falls all around, but one that still rages into the night. The use of keyboards here is interesting, but also adds a new dimension to the piece and the chorus is absolutely stunning as well.

As we take a careful step into the second half of the album we come across a track that rocks so hard, it's likely to cause an outbreak of some serious head banging. This opus of power and glory is entitled **(This Is) Your Let Down**. The tempo and pace is perfection and the guitar here really creates a solid rock partnership with Vincent's driving vocals, ok, I will be honest; this is my favourite composition off the entire album.

Sole Survivor greets us with another slightly altered direction of tone and direction, perhaps also a little lighter than the last offering, but one that has a delightfully smooth guitar driven narrative about its construction. This is a true rock anthem about probably playing a game of last man standing, but what else is there but to do, but kick the dirt from your shoes and carry on.

Now I featured this one on the last Rock chart which announced Vincent's arrival into the top 30. **Ride** is one that you can't help but like. This is a song that has all the great hall marks of a truly fantastic rock single and an equal favourite of mine as well. The construction here includes a superb guitar riff which matched Vincent's power vocals, and the driving energy of a supreme rock ethic about its entire construction, this could well be a classic.

As we drift into the deeper realms of this release we come across a track entitled **Hey You**, this is quite a clever creation and seems to change direction to emphasise the imploring lyrics of frustration. The guitar here is very smooth and creates a real cutting edge to the entire performance.

The penultimate piece is called **Slipping Away**. I adored the start of this track; it had that little Sabbath feel to it that manifested a little extra darkness to the overall song. The chorus draws us a vista of an end that is certain. Vincent's vocals here are deeply moving, in a piece that reminded me at times of *Nickelback* as well.

This is the end of the road my friends, but at least we have a glorious 6 minutes plus to enjoy as our last rock gift. **How Many Times?** is another song of survival and reflection, or even reflection and survival! The hurt is released through rock, and I can personally tell you it is as good a therapy as you can get to heal the wounds of a heart that has been shattered. We also have one heck of an amazing guitar solo here from *William Roux* that would stand proud next to the one that *Slash* created on November Rain.

XX is rock anthology of the trials and tribulations of life's hard knocks and kicks in the head, it's the driving narrative that we all need to allow us to crawl back up the ropes of the ring and keep fighting.

Phil Vincent as a singer and composer has a very special talent, one that he wears on his sleeve, along with his honesty and his desire not to shun away from the truth. Here he has not only created a superb rock album, he has manifested a cathartic musical journey of power driven songs, and thus brought into this world a healing journey we could all benefit from and be inspired by.