

The Man From RavCon
by: Kathleen Johnson

For his seventh release, The Man From RavCon journeys to the heart of early '70s Prog Rock. The genre has taken over in a big way. True, each of the Charlotte one-man outfit's earlier albums exhibited prog influences amidst the surf, spy and Spaghetti Western music focus. But it's in full bloom on his latest all-instrumental effort, *The Puzzle Master*.



"This is the album I always wanted to make, but didn't think I could," TMFR said in a recent interview. "But I don't think I could get much *proggier* due to my technical deficiencies. When you think of prog you think of technical *proficiencies*. I'm not a virtuoso on any instrument!"

Well, there's no doubt TMFR is a true bedroom maestro who not only adroitly handles all instruments and the entire recording-mixing-etc. process, he's an artist gifted with keen song-crafting skill (first displayed in the 1990s with the excellent Charlotte power-jangle-pop band The Ravelers).

The Puzzle Master is a sumptuous CinemaScope mix of deep Euro prog (Italy, Scandinavia) and more-familiar British prog. "The Cosmic Creeper" and "Metropolis" conjure images of Italian bands PFM and Goblin and could fit nicely on a new [Dario Argento](#) film soundtrack. The synth riff of "Erebus" invokes *Wish You Were Here* Pink Floyd, and the mellotron drones throughout will make any Mike Pinder fan shed tears of golden delight. Meanwhile, fellow Charlotte musicians Larry Smith and Joe Diaco make guest appearances on two tracks. Prog on, Man, prog on.

More information: www.reverbNation.com/themanfromravcon