

## SPACE RITUAL BIOGRAPHY

Many decades ago when the world was a more innocent place, there emerged from the ether a band of cosmic travelers who made and lived a new kind of life on earth. They manifested themselves as the spirit of what was then known as "Hawkwind".

After some time, many adventures and experiences, these cosmic travelers became "The Masters of the Universe", a title bestowed on them through their level of development attained by virtue of the good vibrations, positive creative energy and spirit generated by their collective consciousness, interaction and social endeavours.

After many cosmic experiences together, the individual 'Masters' left the security of the 'Hawkwind' and went in search of their own personal 'Holy Grail'. Throughout the depths of time and space they traveled, drawn to their own focal point. Their source, their eternal infinite image and reflection manifesting with their own individual 'Crystal'. These they then strove to understand and learnt to control for the good of all things.

At a certain point in time during their journeys, a group of them coalesced and, upon their return, were recognized and had bestowed upon them the title of 'Star Masters'. They manifested by popular demand, psychic desire and the need to revive the magic thought to be lost, the true original spirit of the Hawkwind, of which the band were all part and remained 'Keepers of the Flame', of what is now 'Space Ritual'.



### **NIK TURNER – vocals, sax, flute**

Founder member of legendary space rock band 'Hawkwind', named after his nick-name (1969-1977). Wrote the seminal underground anthems 'Master of the Universe', 'Brainstorm', 'D-Rider' and was a driving force in the creation of the legend and mythology which created the band's success.

Formed 'Sphynx' (1977 - 1979), Egyptological/hiroglyphic/mumbo-jumbo fun. Formed 'Inner City Unit' (1979-1987), satirical, political, punk, cabaret. Formed 'Nik Turner's Fantastic Allstars' (1987-2004), groovy Latin Jazz/Afro-Cuban/rave. Guested and recorded with numerous bands, including 'Sham 69', 'The Damned', 'Stranglers', 'Ruts', 'Spirit' with Randy California, 'Utopians' etc.

### **TERRY OLLIS – drums**

Founder member of 'Hawkwind' (1969-1972). He has played with 'Laughing Sam's Dice' (with Mick Slattery), 'Little Wing', 'ID Crisis', with Little George Siereff. The Honky Boys and numerous blues and jazz acts.

Explored to great depths, inner and outer space music.

Formed Space Ritual with Nik Turner and Thomas Crimble.

Has two beautiful sons and is now single (get the message girls)

### **Thomas Crimble - bass and rhythm guitars, keyboards & vocals**

Born and raised in Staines and given a guitar by his Grandfather when 12. Played in various bands at school and during the holidays with John Hardman. (X-Tension, The Ho-Dads and The Other Side).

Formed Skin Alley with drummer Giles Pope and manager Richard Thomas (of Clearwater fame), a progressive Jazz-Rock band later to be signed to the Stax Label after leaving CBS. Whilst in Skin Alley Thomas and Giles jammed with Jimmy Hendrix and Stephen Stills at the Revolution Club in London.

After leaving Skin Alley, he was asked to join Hawkwind as bass player, replacing John Harrison who had just completed the 1<sup>st</sup> album. Played in Hawkwind for about 8 months, playing live every night and helping create tracks on the 'In Search of Space' album.

Left Xmas 1970 having been asked to help organise the 1971 Free Glastonbury Festival with Andrew Kerr, Jytte Piggot, Mark Irons and Arabella Churchill. During this time he formed the festival farm house band, 'The Worthy Farm Windfuckers', who played on the original iconic Pyramid stage with Johnny Hodge.

Thomas also played with Hawkwind at that festival. He continued to work with Michael Eavis and the team every Glastonbury Festival until 1999. The Windfuckers also played with Robin Lawrence and Michael Wilding's band in Wales, 'Solar Ben'.

During the 1980's ran Mountain studios, a rehearsal/recording set up in Wales, used by bands including the Thompson Twins, Killing Joke, Marillion, Roy Harper, Saxon, China Crisis, The Slits with Neneh Cherry, Pig Bag, The Pop Group, Max Splodge, Doll by Doll and the Gang of Four. Wrote songs with John Otway on the 'Where Did I Go Right?' album, produced by Neil Innes.

A founder member of Space Ritual along with Nik Turner and Terry Ollis. Starting on bass guitar, moving to rhythm guitar (to accommodate Dave Anderson playing with the band) and has now evolved to playing Hammond Organ & Roland XP80 synth keyboards. Currently writing film music, songs & jingles, when not gardening and restoring a Victorian garden in Wales

### **MICK SLATTERY – guitar, vocals**

Founder member of 'Hawkwind' (1969-1970). Played in 'Famous Cure', 'The Compromise', 'Laughing Sam's Dice' (with Terry Ollis), and 'Fat Finger'.

Mick started out playing the trumpet when he was about 14, although he soon took up playing the 5 string banjo. After seeing Dave Brock and Eric Clapton jamming together at Eel Pie Island, he switched to guitar. Soon he was going busking with Dave and then playing at folk and blues clubs. He joined a band called 'The Compromise' and they released two singles on CBS. They also had a residency at the Marquee Club, in London. This was in 1965.

After that fell apart, Mick joined Dave Brock's, 'Famous Cure' and they spent the summer of '67 in Holland, where they met Nik Turner.

Over the next couple of years they had several name and personnel changes before adding John Harrison and Terry Ollis and later, Nik and Dikmik, becoming Hawkwind Zoo. After Mick left [another story] he had a band called 'Laughing Sam's Dice', with Terry and some other madmen. He went to live in Ireland [to get away from all the madness] and did a lot of busking and playing around the pubs. Back in London he went to college to study guitar making and repairs and had a couple of college bands for a while. Then Mick got 'Fat Finger' together, a band he still gigs with, with Terry Ollis on drums. He joined up with "Space Ritual" 5 or 6 years ago.

### **JERRY RICHARDS – bass, vocals**

Formed Tubilah Dog (with Alf Hardy) in 1985, a musical collective that played at most of the major UK free festivals during the late 1980's.

Met Hawkwind's Dave Brock at the Rollright Stones free festival in 1987, which led to a collaboration between the two bands, putting on further shows around the UK as the infamous HawkDog and the nefarious Agents Of Chaos.

Tubilah Dog undertook several national UK tours as support to Hawkwind, becoming firm friends with the band during that time.

He was invited by Dave Brock to join Hawkwind, as lead guitarist, in 1995.

Jerry recorded and toured extensively with Hawkwind in the UK, EU, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

Subsequently invited by Nik Turner to play bass with Space Ritual following the departure of fellow ex Hawk and uber bassist, Dave Anderson, from the band, back in 2006.

Jerry also has his own band, Earth Lab, with former Hawkwind members Steve Swindells, Simon House and Ron Tree, as well as John Moss of Culture Club, and Winston Blissett of Massive Attack.

Other recent projects include:

Creating sound effects for a Warner Bros. film, the supernatural sci-fi thriller, 'Chemical Wedding', written by Bruce Dickinson and Julian Doyle.

The film also features Earth Lab's 'Separation By Skin', from the album, Element, as part of it's soundtrack.



**CHRIS PURDON – audio generators, synths**

Specialises in analogue synths, making spacey FX, and wibbly-wobbly noises.

Having been a fan of the extended Hawkwind family for most of his life, Chris took up playing home-made effects boxes only three years ago. Kidnapped and cajoled by Nik Turner into playing with Welsh funkmeisters Galaktikos, Chris has since played in a variety of bands and at many of the major UK festivals, including Glastonbury, Guilfest, Big Green Gathering, Eastern Haze, Earthwise and Celtic Blue Rock.

He joined Space Ritual in 2006, the “fan made good”, proving that if he can do it, anyone can.

When not performing, Chris runs his own publishing company from his home in Cardiff. He is the co-editor, with Jill Calvert and publisher of, *The Action Man Explains: An Anthology of the Poems, Stories and Plays of Robert Calvert*, due to be published in 2008.

**SAM OLLIS – decks, percussion**

Played with 'Too Sam Funky', 'Headtone' and was the resident DJ in 'Montpelier Club', Brighton.

Sam has been DJ'ing and collecting records for over 15 years and drumming since the age of 7.

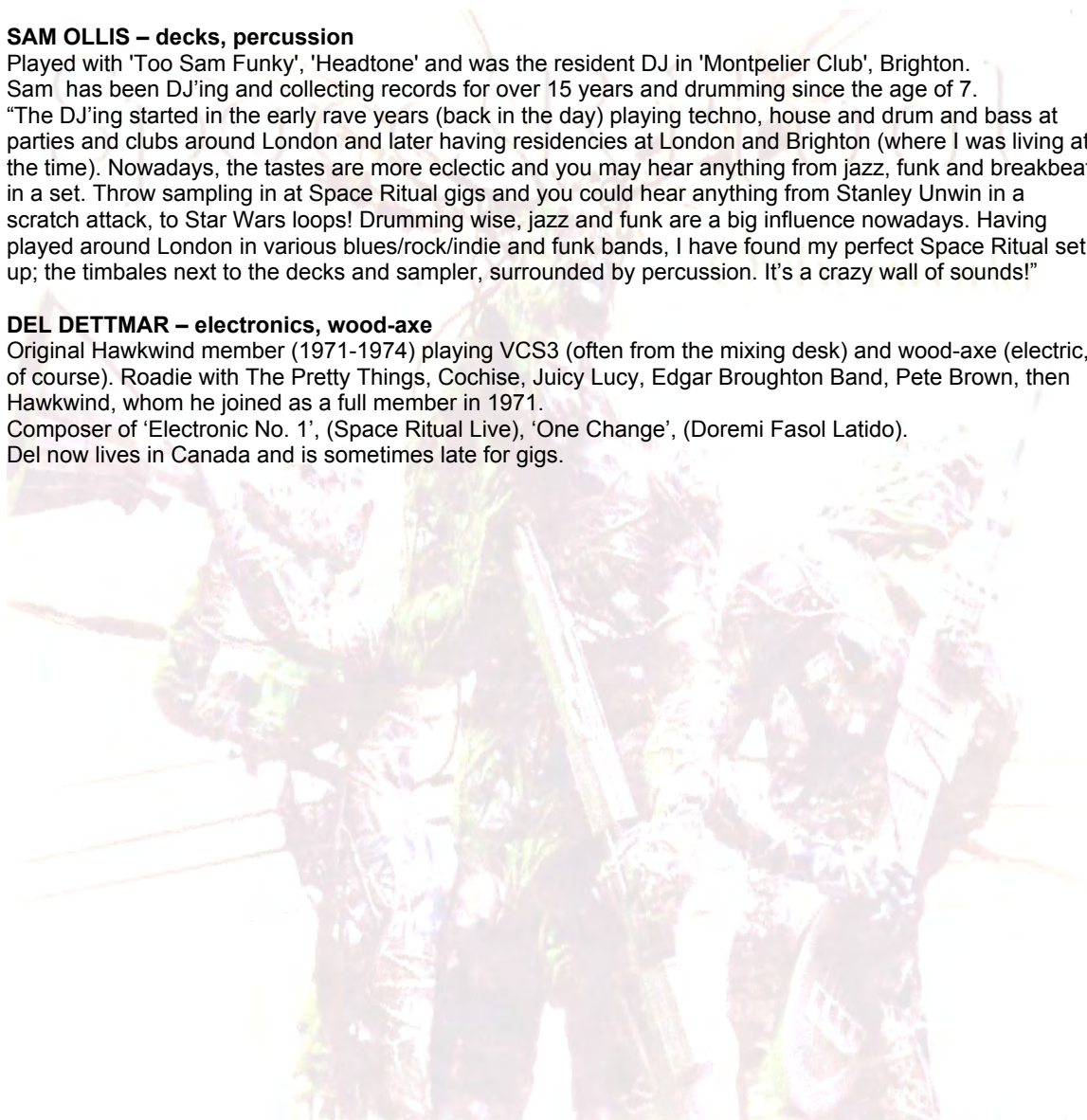
“The DJ'ing started in the early rave years (back in the day) playing techno, house and drum and bass at parties and clubs around London and later having residencies at London and Brighton (where I was living at the time). Nowadays, the tastes are more eclectic and you may hear anything from jazz, funk and breakbeat in a set. Throw sampling in at Space Ritual gigs and you could hear anything from Stanley Unwin in a scratch attack, to Star Wars loops! Drumming wise, jazz and funk are a big influence nowadays. Having played around London in various blues/rock/indie and funk bands, I have found my perfect Space Ritual set up; the timbales next to the decks and sampler, surrounded by percussion. It's a crazy wall of sounds!”

**DEL DETTMAR – electronics, wood-axe**

Original Hawkwind member (1971-1974) playing VCS3 (often from the mixing desk) and wood-axe (electric, of course). Roadie with The Pretty Things, Cochise, Juicy Lucy, Edgar Broughton Band, Pete Brown, then Hawkwind, whom he joined as a full member in 1971.

Composer of 'Electronic No. 1', (Space Ritual Live), 'One Change', (Doremi Fasol Latido).

Del now lives in Canada and is sometimes late for gigs.



## Space Ritual “Otherworld” Album Reviews

**Kerrang (Magazine) (p.50)** - "This is imaginative and occasionally beautiful music, bringing you everything from the careful, hypnotic strains of its title track to the trotting disco inferno madness of 'Ritual Of The Ravaged Earth'..."

### **STARFARER REVIEW: *Essential Listening* : *Space Ritual – Otherworld***

Well, it's been a LONG wait. Too bloody long! So, does it live up to expectations? In short, YES. And then some. It's not perfect, at least not to these ears, but it'll take some beating...

It starts wonderfully with "The Return", synth noises aplenty, cheeky little samples of "Ghost Dance" / "Cosmic Chant" and plenty of spacey atmospherics, fading into rainfall and then "Otherworld" - a somewhat pastoral (Floyd '67-ish?) intro into a fabulous slow-paced spaceathon. It's beautiful, with some immaculate guitar from Mick Slattery (who is on top form throughout). So far, so fantastic!

There is no let-up for the next two tracks, a well-judged revisiting of "The Black Corridor", which Nik manages to make his own, and "Bubbles", which is a fine pounding rocker (and, I assume, is all about the late Barney). "Communique II", which follows, is essentially a Nik rant over a tribal drumbeat from Terry Ollis, and a previous reviewer has highlighted some of the rather dubious lyrics, which I can't disagree with! "Ritual Of The Ravaged Earth", previously available on the "Sonic Savages" EP, is likewise not a personal highlight, although this version is a more powerful mix. Live performances feature a much more melodic vocal part, and it is a shame that the album does not follow suit.

Next up is Del Dettmar's brief, and slightly creepy "ASDF" (no idea what it stands for, sorry) which is a nice enough "One Change" kind of thing leading into the already well-known "Sonic Savages", of which little need be said - it's just as good as it always was! "Droid Love" is a relaxed instrumental featuring some outstanding sax from the Thunder Rider who, like Mr Slattery, is truly at the top of his game instrumentally here. "Time Crime" has been a popular live song for the last few years and, possibly because it's so familiar, I prefer the live renditions. The album is excellently produced, but this particular song is actually diminished by the (over?) production, I feel. It just seems to suit the somewhat stripped-down live sound. Then again, it's a great song, and if this was my first hearing I would have nothing to complain about!

A nice reworking of "Arrival In Utopia" is next, this time as a spoken-word piece in which Nik's vocals capture a strange wide-eyed innocence, over a really rather tasteful piano backdrop, credited to Mr Dettmar. Different, but it works... "Atomik" is another slow-paced instrumental with some exemplary acoustic guitar, but for me lacking Nik's magical flute which makes the live version so enjoyable. Floydian, one might say...

"The Riddle" seriously ROCKS, pure and simple. Along with the title track, it's my personal highlight (oh, and the next track as well...). A second cousin to "Orgone Accumulator", it's also on nodding terms with The Stranglers' "(Get A) Grip (on Yourself)" and is proof enough that the band can cut it at the harder edges of spacerock. "Notes From A Cold Planet" is, for me, up there in the top 3 all-time HW (or related) spoken-word pieces. It is rather grim yet fascinating, and Nik has captured it marvellously. Hats off!

The final track, "Walking Backwards", is another upbeat rocker with some suitably psychedelic vocal effects and sturdy riffing - nothing too astonishing, perhaps, but good fun and a solid end to what is overall a magnificent album. There are, as has been noted by others, some lyrical clunkers, and the lack of vocal melody on a couple of tracks may cause some grumbling. It's also possible that many will consider the album TOO polished, given the SR live experience. Both would be reasonable criticisms, but overall it is a fine piece of work which deserves to be heard (and hopefully supported by) all HW fans, whichever "side" they are on. 9/10.

### **[www.progscape.com](http://www.progscape.com) review:**

Being a Hawkwind fan these days almost feels like being a Marillion fan at the end of the 1980's. With two decidedly different factions, one led by founder Dave Brock and maintaining the Hawkwind name, and the other led by founder Nik Turner under the name Space Ritual, fans have the benefit of twice as much music while perhaps bemoaning the fact that the two men simply can no longer get along.

Nik Turner is joined by a large coterie of ex-Hawks on this first Space Ritual studio album. Dave Anderson contributes bass, acoustic and electric guitars, Terry Ollis handles things behind the kit, Del Dettmar plays axe synth, and Mick Slattery layers on still more acoustic and electric guitar. The band is filled out with John Greves on various synths and keyboards and Thomas Crimble on guitars and keyboards. Both have connections to the Hawkwind mothership, with Crimble being a member of the main band from 1970-1971, while Greves played with Robert Calvert on the legendary *Captain Lockheed and the Starfighters* project.

Mood is important on a space rock album, and mood must be set early in order for it to evolve. *Otherworld* opens with a melange of sound and effects, with distant vocals that sound as if heard from light years away. Tribal vocal samples and sweeping synth buzzes that pan from channel to channel mix to create an sound that is alien, eerie...and yes, otherworldly. Speaking of which, gentle flute and ambient bird-like sounds are layered with bubbling synth sounds on "Otherworld," slowly giving space to quiet acoustic guitar. Nik Turner's vocals are a little deeper than remembered, and perhaps a bit more spoken than sung. Add in some honking and deep tenor sax and layered, harmonized guitar, and you have a recipe for a possible future classic space rock track.

This wouldn't be a Hawkwind related project without spoken word bits. And the fact that the spoken word section is lifted directly from Hawkwind's *Space Ritual* album, and written by prominent science fiction author Michael Moorcock, doesn't hurt things. I believe the earlier live take, from the *Space Ritual Alive in London and Liverpool* album, is a stronger one, yet the more distant, spacey take here fits the rest of the album very well, and offers a nice respite before the next heavy rock blast. "Bubbles" is that solid

blast of heavier space rock, with crunchy guitars and just right solos. It isn't blanga heavy like early Hawkwind, but then again, very little is. Heavy without necessarily plodding, with lyrics name checking Pythagoras and the music of the spheres, the track is solidly written, solidly performed, and offers plenty of opportunity for Nik Turner to blow on his sax. At over seven minutes in length, the piece compares favourably with Hawkwind's extended pieces.

Processed drum sounds and lyrics that quote Michael Moorcock's "Warriors on the Edge of Time" inform "Ritual of Ravaged Earth," with keening synth lines echoing in from the distance. Nik Turner's voice is particularly suited for these SF, space-oriented spoken word compositions, as his voice has a bit of an alien characteristic to it, adding honesty and a touch of verisimilitude to the delivery. A distorted loop of white noise and the words "the edge of time" leads out of the piece and into a deep and eerie bass piano riff, played slow and minimalistically. After several iterations, the theme is played several octaves up, sounding eerier still, as sweeping analogue synths pan from channel to channel. As a mood piece, it succeeds wonderfully; as a full-fledged composition, perhaps not so much.

Hawkwind could have made a career of writing songs about love across the centuries, or love between humans and aliens, or love between humans and androids. Thus, it is only fitting "Droidlove" evokes this theme. A slow, bluesy space track, with gentle synth laying the foundation for Turner's passionate sax playing, one could almost hear this piece being used in a science fiction themed bit of...erm...softer adult entertainment as aired on late night cable television. One might almost find this piece out of place on an album such as this, but it is that very diversity that makes the composition so enjoyable.

The bass line that opens "Time Crime" is hummable in itself. Add in the launch-like synthesizers, and a sudden blast of summery sax driven rock, and one's breath may very well be taken away. Drums almost take on blast beat like rhythms, with some intense double bass drumming. Turner's sax playing is bright and cheerful. Vocals are layered again, with odd effects adding a touch of alien-ness to the piece. Considering how dark much of Hawkwind's material is (and, admittedly, how dark a lot of the preceding album has been), "Time Crime" is like a sudden burst of sunshine in a dreary, Matrix-style world. The alternating sequence between lengthier, song-type compositions and instrumental or spoken word bits continues with a remake of the Calvert piece "Utopia." Nik intones the vocals over pleasant piano accompaniment, run through a touch of echo or reverb to add space and a dreamy feel. Admittedly, it might have been nice to see new spoken word pieces worked up, but "Utopia" is a classic, and as such merits inclusion here as much as anything else.

*Otherworld* closes out with "Walking Backwards," a fairly pacey rocker with honking sax, echoed guitar and vocals, and a four on the floor beat that leaves nothing to chance. Vocals shift forward and backward, while Terry Ollis' drum fills add nicely here and there. This is perhaps one of the most heavily effected track, with no single musical component (save, perhaps, for drums) safe from echo or reverb or phasing. The end result is a psychedelic soup of space rock perfection, with enough punk and funk seasoning to mix things up.

Many of the traditional Hawkwind elements are on fine display here; short instrumental or ambient passages between songs, spoken word and poetry performances, elements of Middle Eastern and tribal musical influences. Of course, having Nik Turner as front man assures that sax and flute will be displayed prominently on almost every track, and his chops have not been so well used in years.

#### **From Aural Innovations #38 (Jan 2008)**

I have to say that this was the surprise CD of the year for me. Nik Turner's Space Ritual have released quite a few not very good live recordings in the past couple several years and so my expectations that he and the old Hawkwind crew (Dave Anderson, Del Dettmar, Thomas Crimble, Mick Slattery, Terry Ollis) would make a great record were quite low. But.... This is a great new space rock CD. Clearly Dave Anderson had a large part to do on this. It does not sound like the old Nik Turner repeat of history over and over but a nice fresh sound, even though a few old Hawkwind/Michael Moorcock tracks are recycled but performed in different and interesting ways. After a spacey intro the CD begins with the title track, *Otherworld*. This features really nice strings, flute and acoustic guitars and has a great vibe to it. A very nice sound production as well. The Black Corridor has gone from a electronic track to a spacey track with a beautiful guitar solo. Bubbles is a stoned groove space rock track with soaring guitar, floating space and a nicely spaced out Nik and leaving plenty of space for all the members to do nice solos in the middle as well. Communique II has that tribal feel and leads directly into *Ritual of the Ravaged Earth*. A lot of really good lyrics by Nik as well on this CD. I am not so sure I like the electronic drums-percussion on this track. ASDF is a short spacey piece with some cool piano that leads into the great track *Sonic Savages*. I really like the vibe on this one and the use of the acoustic guitar. Really nice melodies and plenty of spaced out sounds as well.. *Droid Love* is next laid back track featuring Nik playing some beautiful sax. *Time Crime* features Jerry Richards on guitar and some potent lyrics. Very melodic and the combination of Nik and backing vocal of Jacki works nicely. *Arrival in Utopia* is a really interesting reworking around Del's piano playing. Quite simple but effective. *Atomik* begins with some acoustic guitar that will sound quite familiar. This is a beautiful track as well and written and performed by Thomas Crimble (12 string guitar). The Riddle and *Walking Backwards* are the most uptempo rock tracks on the CD and both really good again allow the band to do guitar and sax solos. Great stuff.. Anyway.. this is really a surprise and I hope that this band will continue to write more original material and stay away from playing all the Hawkwind era stuff that almost none of these guys played on... Keep spacing Nik.....

**Reviewed by [Scott Heller](#)**



## **Record Collector Review January 2008**

### **Otherworld \*\*\*\* Eclectic Discs ECLEC 2011**

Recently in RC we pondered whether Nik Turner's renegade ensemble of ex-Hawkwind members were simply alternative Hawks, or if they enjoyed their own separate identity. Here's the perfect riposte, a debut studio offering that shows them to be a good old-fashioned peace and love band with just a soupcon of contemporary twist.

Though Otherworld has a certain familiarity running through it (mark that down as due to the recycling of lyrics by Hawkwind's revered contributor Michael Moorcock) it's sealed with a fresh up-tempo delivery that veers to the jazz-fusion wing of space rock. Sonic Savages was originally planned back in the 70's for Warrior On The Edge Of Time and alongside the jaunty Time Crime, has been a staple of the Space Ritual since their inception. But other numbers, such as the title-track (itself perhaps a return of fire to Hawkwind's oblique description of member sackings PXR5) are newly minted in departing Space Ritual, and former Amon Duul I I bassist Dave Anderson's studios.

Hawkwind themselves have sometimes missed the mark in recent years through reliance on sequencing and backward glances. Space Ritual, while also having a reflective gander at past times, have delivered a vibrant album that hits the target. **Ian Abrahams**

### **Classic Rock Review December 2007**

They've been described as "more Hawkwind than Hawkwind", and no wonder. Comprised of three former Hawks – saxophonist Nik Turner, drummer Terry Ollis and bassist Dave Anderson – Space Ritual take their name and much of their inspiration from Hawkwind's classic 1973 live album.

Otherworld is, unsurprisingly, a concept album, incorporating poetry from sci-fi author (and hardy Hawkwind associate) Michael Moorcock into a series of surrealist-rock jams. The grandeur of the title track recalls not only vintage Hawkwind but also early-70's Pink Floyd. But it's Black Corridor (Space is not large and it is not small) that reveals just how far-out these funny old men really are.

**\*\*\*\* Malcolm Dome**

### **MOJO Review May 2008**

Who's more Hawkwind, the three-piece with the name led by sole survivor Dave Brock, or Space Ritual's Brock-free line-up, who recorded 1970's In Search Of Space? It's hard to deny that the breakaway faction, led by Space Rock's sax-playing Punch & Judy man Nik Turner, convincingly channel the questing spirit of the group at their best. With crisp production by bassist Dave Anderson and banks of synths with the "whoosh" buttons sellotaped down, this '70's-flavoured electronic rock stays true to the cosmic roots of Hawkwind. Walking Backwards hits a driving riff, then sounds off about evolutionary potential, ancient wisdom and UFOs; or witness the "Pythagorean love machines" of Bubbles, a Who-like salute to late sleeve designer Barney. It's not all of this standard, but it does seem that Baron Brock's band and Space Ritual are both Hawkwind. **\*\*\* Ian Harrison**

### **Andrew C. Madden \*\*\*\*\***

More Hawkwind than Hawkwind?! Strange but possibly true - this band features ex members: Nik Turner, Dave Anderson, Terry Ollis, Del Dettmar, Mick Slattery and Tom Crimble. Whilst John Greves was in Robert Calvert's group on Captain Lockheed and the Starfighters and theres a guest credit to Jerry Richards on guitar on Time Crime. That alone makes this band more Hawkwind than Hawkwind, or rather more original Hawkwind than Hawkwind.

This is what Nik Turner has been saying all along. The Hawkwind of today is completely different to the band of the early 70's. Synths rule, there's little guitar work and samples are common. This album seems to hark back to the good old days of musicianship - guitars (acoustic, electric, nah nah and 12 string), and musical instruments like flute and sax, mellotron and djembe. There's a real feel of song writing, of jamming together (the songs have been about for a while in some form or another), of the band having fun. Is this why Alan Davey really left?

Otherworld is a great album, the songs in particular that stand out are the Turner/Anderson ones - Otherworld, Sonic Savages, Time Crime, The Riddle and Walking Backwards. But the others are strong too - old Hawkwind fans will recognise lyrics and riffs from days of yore - Mike Moorcock is credited for lyrics (yet another Hawkwind link!!!).

The stomping sax, the floating flute, the soaring guitar work (like the Levitation era of Lloyd Langton) all make you believe that this is where Hawkwind should have been today. Take me to your leader was good, but dare I say it (being a Hawkfan) this is better - the magic of Hawkwind is here in all its glorious space rock camaraderie. And Nik Turner ought to know (he was the original "Hawkwind" - hawking cough and wind from down below!!)

If you like Hawkwind, Bedouin, Alan Davey, Litmus, Mr. Quimbys Beard, Anubian Lights, and all the other space rock bands this really is a no brainer - a great album, great playing, bizarre lyrics (check out Communique II and Notes From A Cold Planet) and a great band.

Its the old time Hawkwind brought soaring into the 21st century.

### **CD Services, Dundee**

The original rock 'n' roll space warrior, the alien godfather of rock, Nik Turner has a new studio album out now with Space Ritual, the band he formed with other former founder members of the classic Hawkwind line-up of: Terry Ollis, Dave Anderson, Thomas Crimble and Mick Slattery. Space Ritual are true exponents of space-rock, performing sell-out concerts and drawing on "classic" Hawkwind repertoire written by Nik Turner, Dave Anderson and Terry Ollis. Now Space Ritual come alive in the 21st century with this stunning new studio album of original material that takes the ground breaking music of these ex-Hawkwind members into a new dimension that is both contemporary, but still aware of its heritage and roots. Also featuring poems written by sci-fi author Michael Moorcock, 'Otherworld' has been described as

"more Hawkwind than Hawkwind" by one commentator, but Space Ritual are more than that - They are a band in their own right, with their own style and future, and 'Otherworld' will really ram home to each and every Hawkwind fan on the planet, because this is one sensational space-rock album from start to finish! The 15 tracks follow a similar path to classic Hawkwind records where longer tracks are interspersed with shorter atmospheric instrumentals and poems. The instrumentation has a real analogue feel, with Greaves' Mellotron and synthesizers combining well with Turner's sax and flute, plus excellent guitar work and a tight rhythm section driven by Anderson and Ollis play together with true precision. After a short cosmic intro, in comes the title track - an amazing song featuring sax & Mellotron and with a real hook that grabs you after just one run-through, and getting the album off to a real solid start. After another cosmic interlude, 'Bubbles' really blows your mind with a great lyric and a stunning display of phenomenal electric guitar soloing from Anderson and Slattery (that reminded me of Kingdom Come's 'Journey' album at times), and Turner's raging but tuneful sax just blazing through the heavens. Everything that follows over the album's sixty-two minute running time will further cement in your mind the fact that this new Space Ritual unit are as good as classic Hawkwind, but tighter - much, much tighter! 'Walking Backwards' closes the disc with a space rocker to challenge the best of Hawkwind past, and leaving you wondering just how good might Hawkwind have been today if the Turner element had still been there? This is classic space-rock in the making - brilliant cosmic rock that I defy any space-rock fan not to be blown away by!

### **Santtu Laaksu Psychotropic zone**

Nik Turner, the ex-singer/saxophonist/flutist of Hawkwind, is one of the most important musicians in my life. He's also a really nice bloke! His 90's solo albums were really good space rock, but he hasn't been putting out any studio material in that vein since then. I've really been looking forward to this album since he started a new space rock band mainly with his old pals most of whom have been at least for a little while members of Hawkwind in 1969 or early 70's. There are already a couple of live albums and even one very promising live DVD out by them proving that this band has a lot of potential, but in my opinion, only just this studio album shows us the real essence of the band. I must say that although the albums made with the crème of the US space rock posse were great, Otherworld is even better! If there's someone out there who has suspected that Space Ritual is some kind of poor man's Hawkwind, he's been so wrong. On Otherworld the band presents their own sound that includes for example acoustic guitars. All the musicians play very well, and the sonic world is extremely well thought of but not over-produced. Naturally there's also some Hawkwind feel to the music and some words have been recycled again. Personally, I enjoy a lot the fact that the fellows have really been able to write many great new songs.

The album begins with the short, spacey sound collage "Return" and then we get the atmospheric and marvellous title track of the album. The beautiful and tranquil beginning already promises a lot, and this sure is a really great, mid-tempo piece that has a sort of similar feel to it than "D-Rider". The chorus is truly excellent and the song also has great guitar and sax solos. "Black Corridor" is a shorter ambient piece and the narration is familiar from the early 70's Hawkwind shows. There is some nice lead guitar work over there! Then we get a totally new, rather slow track called "Bubbles" that works very well and is also pretty heavy. "Communique" is all about UFO's and lent from Nik's 90's solo output, although now the backing is just some tribal drumming. "Ritual of the Ravaged Earth" differs from the rest of the tracks in that it's rather electronic. The lyrics quote Michael Moorcock. It's a stimulating and well-designed number that reminds me of Kraftwerk a bit! "ASDF" is a short instrumental including piano and space noises. The heavy and mid-tempo "Sonic Savages" is one of my favourites, a god dam great song! This one has some nice space sounds and a superb sax solo. The ethereal, ambient and very pleasant "Droid Love" includes synthesizers and saxophone. At this point I was really waiting to hear some faster stuff, and that's exactly what they offer next! "Timecrime" is a really rocking song about the perils of travelling in time. It's a bit punky number with strong bass, harmonic vocals in the chorus, sax, flute etc. One of the best tracks on the album without a doubt. Totally amazing stuff!

"Arrival in Utopia" is a two-minute-long piano piece where Nik narrates lyrics used by Hawkwind in the 80's. The acoustic guitars are in frequent use on the album and in a very successful way, but especially on the folky "Atomik" they really shine. This one is a pretty instrumental that has percussion, plenty of space sounds, keyboards and excellent acoustic guitar and flute solos. "The Riddle" shows us again, that guys over 60 are still capable of doing some serious rocking! The track starts off with a hallucinatory synth thing, but the real rock and roll begins in less than a minute. This is the second fastest song on the album and has an interesting chorus and brings to mind Inner City Unit or Bob Calvert's 80's solo albums. Towards the end they repeat three chords in a great way and the very end is really psychedelic. I really dig it, that's all I can say! "Cold Planet" is a New Age styled ambient piece that starts to work when Nik's sci-fi spirited, gloomy speech joins in. They have saved the heavy, almost stoner rock like "Walking Backwards" till the end, and during this song my four-year-old boy said "hey this is a really great song, I love heavy metal!". The lyrics seem to be about Nik's life... This reminds me of Nik's 90's solo albums, but this still sounds totally unique. Tight playing, very effective recitative vocals, and the synth madness in the end...a totally amazing ending for this album that's very successful in all aspects.