

# LadyObscure

*I am the music freak extraordinaire...  
I find bands and albums like me; obscure...  
I see that which others do not and make them obscure no more!*



## Rustfield – Kingdom of Rust

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- Artist: **Rustfield**
- Released: **8/12/13**
- Genre: [Progressive Metal](#)
- Posted by: **Progradar**



Whilst I may run foul of repeating myself once too often, I must reiterate that 2013 has been a stellar year for new progressive rock and progressive metal releases. Not just from the behemoths of the genre like [Dream Theater](#), [The Flower Kings](#), [Spock's Beard](#) and the ever-improving [Haken](#) but, numerous new bands whose debut recordings have just contributed immensely to the plethora of epic prog releases we have heard this year. 2013 has been the best year for new progressive related music that I can remember in my 46 years (although, I must admit, I didn't listen to much prog when I was still in nappies! To be honest, I didn't listen to anything resembling music at all!), and, I still get as much of a shiver of excitement when I listen to a great album from a new exponent of the genre as I do from listening to the latest album from a band that has been well established for a long time. What has really impressed me this year is the number of bands that have released material that harks back to a more traditional style of progressive metal, albums from [Tritonus](#) and [Mind:Soul](#) spring to mind and, as 2013 draws to a close, I have yet one more musical gem that has dropped onto my reviewing lap that follows a similar principle, although with a twist as you will find out as you read on. Welcome to Italy's Rustfield and their debut release **Kingdom of Rust**.

Rustfield was born in 2007 from an idea conceived by **Davide Ronfetto**, composer, professional guitarist and all-round musician skilled on many instruments. He was immediately joined by his long time friend **Andrea Rampa**, who is an accomplished singer, even though he pretends to be an aerospace engineer. The two comrades in arms soon started to compose music and write lyrics, mastering the ephemeral concept of progressive music by intertwining very different ambiances together to produce music with an unfaltering fast and heavy soul pertaining to heavy metal mixing with electronic music, rhythmical progressive tricks and typical sounds of a more psychedelic nature, never forgetting a song's catchiness. Rustfield were quickly joined by other talented musicians in order to bring their music to life. In the early months of 2011, the line-up was completed with **Alessandro Spagnuolo** (bass & double bass), **Luca Spagnuolo** (electric & classical guitar) and **Salvo Amato** (drums & percussion) and the band played

their first live shows on Italian and foreign stages. However the going really got tough in April 2013, when the guys signed with the German label Massacre Records, in order to release their debut album Kingdom of Rust. The debut album features many special guests such as **John Macaluso** (Symphony X, ex-Y.J. Malmsteen) on drums, **Federica De Boni** (White Skull) on vocals, and **Douglas R. Docker** (Docker's Guild, ex Biloxi) on keyboards.

Kingdom of Rust starts in a traditional progressive metal vein with the muscular **Among the Fields of Rust** and the equally powerful **Waxhopes**, thunderous riffs combined with pounding drums and solid keyboards played with a technical efficiency that shines through. I must confess to not being immediately struck by the vocals but, after only one or two listens, they really begin to work, a strong voice thumping out the lyrics to match the intense musical ability on show and, when the frenetic tempo lessens to show a softer side to the vocals, they really shine through. Quality licks and tight solos fire from the guitarists throughout the two tracks and they are both just long enough to evoke a complex character and feeling to the tracks, really forceful and dynamic so far but mixing moments of reflection amongst the raw energy otherwise evident. There is a lighter side to Rustfield much in evidence on **Losing Time**, soft vocals, gentle drumming and the keyboards laying down a lilting melody in the background, a sound that is much more akin to traditional progressive rock. The nicely worked guitar at the end is a treat. A clear acoustic guitar introduces us to **Love Moan**, a soft ballad that showcases the complexity of the vocal arrangements. The acoustic guitar is joined by a gentle piano in a haunting melody that undulates across the soundscape. It is a testament to the skill of the musicians that there is a seamless transition from the powerful opening tracks to the velvety feel and classical edge that is on show now. A classy guitar solo just adds to the ambience. **Burning the Air**, **Sacrifice** and **Social Contract** bring you right back from the reverie with really cool riffs and a more urgent vocal. These songs are all about menace and suspense from the harder edged vocal to the insistent riff and coruscating keyboards. Back to the world of solid progressive metal with discordant guitar and keyboards licks echoing around a forceful vocal performance. The tracks segue seamlessly into each other and **Sacrifice** takes a more electronic and mainstream rock mode with its harmonious chorus and the prominence of the keyboards whilst still carrying the recurring melody through from the former song. The electronic edge is prominent again in **Social Contract** but it carries through the more metallic feel of **Burning the Air** forming a trilogy of tracks which, whilst having their own unique attributes, are clearly linked together.

The album continues with **The Secret Garden**, the whole vibe moving completely away from progressive metal and flowing into classic progressive rock with a solid neo-progressive feel. The breathy vocal, ethereal keyboards and featherlight percussion give a wondrous, otherworldly feel to the album, almost to the point of being prog-pop. It is a fine line to walk and could be a dangerous route to follow, possibly dividing opinion but I think it really works. This prog-pop musical feel continues with **Run with Me**,

a more up-tempo song but, with a real mainstream rock feel to it, the keyboards very prominent along with a neat guitar riff and solid vocal. A nice solo is thrown in the mix and the song is brought to a sharp conclusion, brief but a worthy addition. Now comes the highlight of the album for me, a really excellent track that runs the whole gamut of progressive influences to produce a masterful example of how a prog rock instrumental should be done, **Out of the Blue** is another differing chapter in this complex album but an iridescent one at that. The epic guitar playing is just stand out brilliant and the track twists and turns with low tempo interludes that allow you to get your breath and appreciate the complexity of the musical experience. There is a superb jazz inspired section where the guitar just oozes class, I, honestly feel that this is the instrumental track of the year. Get yourself comfy, put your favourite headphones on, turn up the volume and immerse yourself in this quite edifying piece of music. **High Waters** completes the twist and the transformation from progressive metal to a more progressive rock orientated mood, coming in at over eleven minutes long it is a prog rock epic that can stand tall with the juggernauts of the genre. A subtle introduction with low key, laid back vocals overlaying ambient waves of sound from the keyboards makes way for some uber smooth guitar playing with hint of jazz/prog fusion and psychedelica. The tempo increases as the guitar takes on a harder, more prominent edge and the keyboard becomes much more assertive. The whole song takes on a grand, theatrical feel and moves into the theatre of modern progressive rock, flashing guitar riffs and smooth licks interspersed with the fervent vocal and solid rhythm section, a high quality finish to a suitably impressive album.

The bumper crop of quality releases for 2013 has just been bulked up by another entry. You cannot call Rustfield another progressive metal band, their music is much more diverse than that and, it is done so well, that it is improved by the diversity rather than diluted. Kingdom of Rust is a quality debut album from a band that should have a bright future ahead. This record really hits the heights and has some quality stand out moments, highly recommended.

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