

Human, the fourth album of Frank Van Bogaert is his most "organic" album so far. The music is atmospheric, textured and melodious, but not in a structured sort of way. This CD is far more spontaneous than his early work and hence seems to explore "freefall" the forms of music he is so good at. The music reminds me of a sort of experimental Vangelis with some very moving instrumental textures combined with the best of electronica.

I especially like the range of Human, it seems to cover many genres of music and makes itself very hard to pin down, there are "moods" for reflection, more upbeat pieces as well as more relaxed and atmospheric tracks. It has a very organic feel where the music just moves where it wants to go, it is very natural, flowing and moving. Very highly recommended.

2003 © Living Traditions Magazine

His best yet, with strains of Vangelis, Berlin, and just flat out fantastic melodic electronic keyboards galore - crank it up music - definitely one for the car CD changer!

HUMAN is absolutely amazing!!

2002 © Bill Binkelman / Wind and Wire

Also wanted to comment on Frank van Bogaert's latest release, 'Human' CD. Frank's done it again. The man is consistently good. Has me thinking that he's better than Vangelis, whom a few consider the master in this type of melodic EM. The man is good !

2003 © Frank Arellano

Human, the fourth album of Frank and his best album so far. I can't wait to hear his next albums. The CD starts very easy, good too relax after a hard day of work. A short track, which goes over to a more rhythmic and synthetic track. Influences of Vangelis can be found in this track. Nice is the sublime voices mixed in between. Totally different is Technologika. More industrial, a robot voice direct in the beginning. Nice textures and a good drum game during the track. Atmospheric Conditions is powerful Vanglis like track on this album, while meander is more sax-based. Not one of favourites on this album, but my father heard it, and he loves it, just because the sax was so great played. Then we come to the title track "Human". Nice atmospheric melody lines with some piano textures in between. The next track brings you to an island just to relax, a place to be alone, dreaming away on the tones of the music. Again, after a slow track, Frank plays a more powerful track. A rapid track with good sequences and mixed together with ethnic melodies. Reunion is a track that can be played in the bar lounge of a hotel. Easy with a little blues in it. Naked is tender, a little in the ambient direction, with nice piano textures. Rêve d'Afrique, the second track with ethnic influences. A mix between slow and rapid melody lines. The last track, "Warmth", a very relaxing, atmospheric track. Nice piano sounds, which gives us time to wake up again of this beautiful album and play it again. The album is a nice mixture of ambient, new age, Vangelis, atmospheric

style. I can only recommend this album.

(c) Sven Cipido, Electron

Like Frank himself tells us in the leaflet accompanying his new album, in "Human" he has bet for improvisation rather more than in his previous works. The result of having allowed himself to follow the inspiration of the moment has been fully fruitful. On the one hand, we have the basic style of his previous albums, where he portrays a musical landscape of multiple influences. On the other hand, we find a warmth and spontaneity that remind us of those typical in a live performance. Between melodic Synth Pop and the New Instrumental Music, all the CD has an air mainly blissful, optimistic, full of positive energy.

2002 © ALEJANDRO HINOJOSA / Amazing Sounds Spain

Human opens with the relaxed and mysterious composition "**Awakening**". With the next track "**Ballet**" we enter a world of rhythm, synthetic fx and gorgeous melodies. Caught up by an air stream we are floating through a canyon to a valley hidden by snowy mountains where a primitive tribe has just begun its ritual dance. It's as if one can almost touch mankind's past. An image of primeval nature and consciousness remaining somewhere deep inside, not touched by human civilization.

Frank Van Bogaert's music feels as if it lays a bridge between the past and the future. It is always image evoking. "**Atmospheric Conditions**" evokes images of beautiful places, cities with snow-white towers hidden in the mist.

I confess that I have been looking forward to the release of this fourth Frank Van Bogaert album. My prime interest was to see in which direction his creative search would develop.

With "**Human**" he has **surpassed all my expectations!** Frank Van Bogaert has remained true to himself, his music is as great-sounding as always without losing his trademark, but on this album it has become a bit more improvised, not being restrained by a classic structure.

In two compositions Frank did use guest-musicians playing acoustic instruments. Just listen to the fabulous saxophone in "**Meander**" and the exotic viola Braguesa in "**Reunion**".

Frank Van Bogaert's album is called "Human" not by chance since this music is full of vital energy, tenderness ("**Naked**") and sublimity of feelings ("**Rêve d'Afrique**").

Frank has clearly the gift of putting all his emotions in his music.

The album ends with the romantic and slightly cosmic "**Warmth**".

"Human" should appeal not only to electronic music lovers but also to a wide circle off new-age and modern instrumental music fans. I would call "Human" an excellent work of "new electronic music", **an album that should be in the collection of every music-lover.**

2002 © Serge Kozlovsky

Translated out of Russian by Tatyana L. Permyakova

The Belgian composer, producer and musician Frank van Bogaert is a master in creating music that brings together all the best from great melodic synthesizer music, film-like music and rhythmic pop "**Human**", his fourth album, is **the best example of his skills until now**.

Frank really composes music: his melodies are thoughtful and built up with very much feeling and room for details. After the short opening "Awakening", excellent effects open "Ballet" which is perhaps **the best piece of music Frank has ever written**: sublime melodies reminiscent of Vangelis himself and strong rhythms. This influence can also be heard well in the title track, which could easily come from one of the recent albums of the Grandmaster.

Sometimes Frank slows down like in beautiful tracks like "Lullaby" and "Naked" in which he sits behind a grand piano. Influences from ethnic music can be heard in pieces like "Ouverture Des Enfants" and "Rêve d'Afrique".

The last number on the album is called "Warmth". Actually, this is all where Frank's music is all about. It combines relaxing pianosounds and beautiful atmospheres.

"Human", an album with a very "human" sound, deserves to be listened to.

2002 © Paul Rijkens

FRANK VAN BOGAERT

Human

Groove Unlimited (2002)

I didn't think it would be this soon that keyboardist Frank Van Bogaert would top his last album, Docking. But, damn, if Human doesn't just top it - it completely transcends it. **Human is a fantastic CD**, filled with a wide assortment of great songs, ranging from bouncy Berlin-esque EM, to dramatic Vangelis-like keyboard numbers, to softer romantic tracks and even some world fusion textured cuts. Only one song (of the twelve on the disc) is less than great (and that one is still good). The music is always accessible and imminently listenable - in fact, I positively loved this album from the very first playing.

After a short (about two-minute) ambient/new age-sounding opening track played out on a bank of synths and twinkling keyboards (some with a Vangelis-like sound), Human hits the ground running on 'Ballet' which is nothing like what you would expect from its title. A reverbed synth note gradually increases in volume and frequency, joined by some snappy electronic percussion. Synth strings come sweeping in accompanied by timpani, and then the lead keyboard line plays the main refrain. When the 'chorus' hits you, it's like an EM explosion - full of genuine grandeur and majestic power (you simply must crank this album up!). Nice vocal chants add some fun world music texture to the song (the vocals have a vague African feel to them).

However, Human is just getting warmed up. The third track is 'Technologika' and it's even more fiery of a number, careening in from the background amidst peppery

percussive textures, a blend of neo-Berlin and straight up new age keyboards, and lots of cool drum work. This cut is a rave-up delight and had me itching to move every time I played it. The spoken word sample ('Technologie' spoken with vocoder effects) makes the songs even cooler. There are some nice background vocals in parts of this song as well - but you'll barely notice them as anything but another instrumental layer.

Besides these two excellent tracks, you'll also hear a dreamily somber yet powerful Vangelis-like (circa Blade Runner) number ('Atmospheric Conditions'); a mixture of atmospheric piano and keyboards with Germanic EM touches (the title song); a high-energy rapid fire sequencer track ('Ouverture des enfants') that also showcases Frank's dexterity on piano, keyboards and drums as it morphs into a more mainstream-new age music sounding arena; and a semi-bluesy spin into cyber-lounge EM on 'Reunion' (featuring a variety of synths, including choral effects similar to Vangelis' The City album) that has moments of drama followed by subtle beauty. There's also a beautiful semi-ambient number ('Naked') highlighted by an assortment of synths, some in a Berlin drone vein and others more 'sprarkly' and melodic. The most overt world fusion number (harkening back to Frank's work on Docking or Colors) is 'Rêve d'Afrique,' but even here the song is much more 'Van Bogaert' in feel than something from, say James Asher.

As I stated above, some numbers don't clean my clock as much as others ('Meander' has some sax work that, while well-done by Frank De Ruytter, seemed out of place on the album), but taken as a whole, I believe Human is Frank Van Bogaert's best recording by far. I played it at least ten times (including on my portable player during several walks through my neighborhood) before writing this review and **loved it more each time**. It may be a bit too melodic for die-hard Berlin school fanatics (even though the album is on Groove Unlimited), but fans of rhythmic keyboard music that is catchy without being too commercial should rejoice when the synths pour forth from their speakers. Highly recommended!

2002 © Bill Binkelman for "Wind and Wire" magazine

FRANK VAN BOGAERT: Human (CD on Groove Unlimited)

This CD from 2002 features 62 minutes of vibrantly dynamic electronic music.

Building on various European electronic influences, Van Bogaert has developed his own style that is both masterful and delicate. His chords are majestically epic, while his structure ranges from experimental to deeply classical. The music itself, though, is contemporary electronics of valorous proportion with a rhythmic presence and eloquent melodies.

Versatile keyboards belt out sequences and power riffs, melding with interlocking textural foundations and strenuously intricate (and often overpowering) E-perc to produce energetic tuneage that is capable of knocking the listener from their seat. This power lies not just in Van Bogaert's authoritative delivery, but stems from his powerful compositions which seethe with unbridled voracity and passion. This music fills the audience with inspiration and the promise of greatness.

Frequently enhancing the music's scope are non-lyrical vocal choirs, while other tracks feature steamy saxophone and wistful viola.

There's no spacey journeys here, nor drifting passages through high altitude cloudscares. All of Van Bogaert's creative juices are channeled into interpreting the human condition in electronic melodies, a task that he superbly achieves with this CD. These tracks convey a richness of organic quality, communicating non-verbally with the inner psyche.

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