

**Band:** Ivy Gold

**Title:** Six Dusty Winds

**Label:** Golden Ivy Records



Well, here's a multi-talented, international band that has a female vocalist who sounds like she means business! Yes, Ivy Gold consist of German based guitarist Sebastian Eder, Anders Olinder from Sweden on keys, Kevin Moore (Bass), Tal Bergman (Drums) of the USA, and of course, Manou (vocals), who together have come up with a Blues/Rock album that hits the mark just when it's needed.

One thing that stands out for me, especially on the opener 'Face Of Deceit', is the similarities of Manou's vocal style to that of a certain Grace Jones, a no nonsense, ballsy tone to it which is applied well to the blues-tinged vibe that is all over the track, and on the following hard-edged funky riffed 'This Is My Time', well ... this could easily be Ms Jones trying her hand at being a bonafide Rock Star, though she wouldn't be happy with the fantastic guitar work from Eder taking centre stage as it does here. You remember what happened to Russell Harty!!!!

'Retribution' is a moody, almost cynical sounding affair where Manou literally spits out her words in protest and anger at the World, whilst the rest of the band do their best to keep the music as bare and miserable as they can, hence the moody state, so thank the Lord that the band decide to funk the joint up on the bass-led toe-tapper 'Believe', and I'm sorry to mention it again, but the vocals and guitars are definitely slipping into Grace Jones territory! This off-kilter track jumps from uber-funk rock to snazzy bluesy/rock at the snap of the finger, Eder's guitar and Moore's bass doing the 'biz' all the way through, though that off-kilter drum pattern and jazzy Hammond shouldn't be dismissed lightly either!

The title track benefits from the gentle fusion of the keys and guitar that start off the song and continue on throughout, and it's here where Manou sounds at her best and most comfortable on this laid-back serene bluesy song, and she carries that on into the jazz/blues/rock combo that makes up 'Suspicion', an easy-on-the-ear, toe-tapper that is probably the best track on this album (for me!).

The mood is slowed down with the shimmering ballad 'Shine On', Eder once more letting the six-string take care of the track, with the keys, bass 'n drums seemingly just happily adding their parts to this fine, summery song, oh...and there's also an appearance of a tambourine as well, which is always nice to hear, but there's no such luck on the snazzy-guitared mid-pacer 'We Are One', where the keys and bass decide to take control for once before Eder's solo kicks in and takes over.

This album is definitely ruled by some great guitar work from Eder, and that's not meant as a put-down for the other members of the band, but Eder's input is the central ingredient for most of the songs, as it is on the smouldering, slow burning 'Without You', but this song is definitely a 'band affair', where everyone is on top form to get the outcome of this smashing track. It all comes to the end with the ballsy, harmonious groover 'Born Again', which has Manou showing both sides to her vocal ability, gentle one moment, forceful and commanding the next, and as far as the musicianship goes, well, they certainly don't let her down, that's for sure!

Released on their own label, Golden Ivy Records, 'Six Dusty Winds' is a canny debut for the band, and it'll be interesting to see how it gets received by the public who are desperate for some new music during these hard times that we're going through, though hopefully not for much longer! Give it a go, folks. *Review by: Robb Baldwin*