

### AMBIENTRANCE ONLINE:

As well-produced as this project is (which is very) I've got problems with Virtuality... it's hardly ambient (the opening sequencer atmospherics of Upon the Frontiers of the Infinite Night (2:23) and the tone drones of Attilion Sunrise being exceptions)... but that's okay; Mosher's rocking style injects some serious kick-ass into the electro-prog sounds which usually bore me. A Season of Fire for instance deftly slips some old-school synthtronics into layers of slap-happy drumming, power riffing and frenzied bass-stalking. It's actually quite exhilarating to hear some truly blistering leads erupt from the thundering core.

No... the problem is the vocals... fine as they are... I can't handle the Whitesnake, Styx, Rush, etc. flashbacks they induce... sorry, man. Other instrumentals include the synthswept planes of Shores of a Cosmic Ocean and the pulse-pounding rocktronica of Infinity Burns. With less-bombastic singing, Sorrow in a World of Darkness (10:11) wraps the tight sound-art-philosophy package with keyboard action sparkling amid boilingly metallic strings.

Released 20 years ago, this would've ranked right up there with Billy Thorpe's Children of the Sun as a sci-fi-rock hit, and could still thrill the classic-rock crowd today were they able to let go of their beloved icons of yestercene for just 72 minutes. Sorry to let my personal anti-rockstar-vocal thing get in the way, Scott... if you go all-instrumental, I'll be jammin' right along! For those ready to rock their listening world, seek The Ambient Mind. - (8/10)

### AURAL INNOVATIONS:

Well here's something a little different. North Carolina resident Scott Mosher plays a brand of heavy progressive rock that combines several easy to describe styles into something that's a little difficult to describe. I'll quote the blurb from his web site: "Virtuality merges the worlds of trance, ambient, new-age and metal forged in the fires of atmospheric neo-progressive song structures". It's difficult to call the music either neo-prog or prog-metal, though these are the worlds it essentially resides in. But what Mosher has done is take heavy Rush influences (with a dash of Dream Theater) and inject a heavier keyboard presence that is sometimes symphonic and sometimes recalls the spaciness of Tangerine Dream or robotic synth patterns of Kraftwerk. It's an interesting combination of influences that gives a welcome edge and variety to a form of progressive rock that doesn't often establish an identity of its own. With the exception of brief guest vocals and guitar, Mosher plays all guitars, keyboards, and vocals, and did all the dark futuristic art in the liner notes.

Among the highlights is the title track which features heavy Rush influences, though the keyboards are as prominent as the guitar giving a full orchestral heavy rock feel. "The Human Machine" opens with a syncopated keyboard pattern and other Kraftwerkian synth textures. But the percussion buildup indicates that heavy rock is imminent, and sure enough, the music blasts off into full symphonic metal. It's great to hear blasting guitars married with lush keyboards, and the additional synth work takes the music to a level beyond simple prog-metal that makes it much more interesting for this listener. "The Dreaming Eye" is a similar track, but more space symphonic than metallic. I really like the thematic shifts between heavy rock and spacey keyboard patterns.

Dreamy moments quickly accelerate and absolutely ripping guitar bits blaze over trancey synth patterns. "A Season Of Fire" is another strong track with searing keyboards that add a welcome cosmic element to this progressive instrumental. Really nice guitar work along with Tangerine Dreamy keyboards. "Attilion Sunrise" and "Shores Of A Cosmic Ocean" are the most mellow tunes on the CD, being heavenly ambient pieces. "Re-Define" is the most Rush styled rocker on the disc but heavier on the keyboards. In fact, it sounds like Geddy Lee himself sitting in on vocals in both singing style and the sound of the voice. And the closing track, "Sorrow In A World Of Darkness", is a 12 minute epic in which all of Mosher's influences come together, blasting seamlessly through Rush styled progressive rock, keyboard intensive neo-prog, and ambient space. An impressive set that will appeal to a diverse audience including space and prog rockers.

### BACKGROUND MAGAZINE:

Scott is a busy man. Not only is he a graphic artist and a (web)designer, he also made this CD virtually (no pun intended) by him self. The only help he got was from Todd Corsa (vocals, guitars) and Mickey James (one bass solo). And that is where the problem lies. "Virtuality" suffers from bloodlessness, the same disease that many records that were made by a guy or gal alone suffer from. The back cover states that the CD should be filed under ambient neo-progressive cyber rock. And that's not a bad description at all. The album rocks, a lot of songs contain spacey keyboard arrangements, not unlike Steve Hillage did on, let's say, "Green" and some parts are quite bombastic / symphonic. Most songs are mid tempo rockers that are consequently ruined by Corsa's vocals. His monotonous and unstable voice gets annoying at times. The programmed drums are sometimes just 'offbeat" and unsteady. Add to that the mostly under measure compositions and we have no winner. Some moments are enjoyable like "The dreaming eye" and "The human: machine", but these are the songs with few or distorted (Ayreon like) vocals. It's just that there are so many good releases at the moment, so I'm afraid that Mosher is not gonna make it. Maybe if he gathered some more real people around him, musicians of blood 'n bone and a real life producer. \*\*5 (Hans D)

### BALLBUSTER MAGAZINE

This CD describes itself as being "ambient neo progressive cyber rock". I suppose that's a pretty good description of it. Scott Mosher is a multi-instrumentalist who played all the instruments on this album. Vocal duties were handled by Todd Corsa. There is a great deal of Rush influence here. Corsa, on some songs, is a dead ringer for Geddy Lee. His nickname, in fact, is "Shreddy Gee". Mosher's guitar style is also very similar to Alex Lifeson's.

There's no doubt Scotty here is very talented. As I said, he played just about everything on this album, and he did a good job of it. There are lots of high-tech, space age style keyboards and sound effects, which sound very sophisticated and complex, and he is also very good with guitar and drumming. However, I find this album to be a bit self-indulgent. It is over seventy minutes long, much of it is instrumental (two of the intro tracks, "Atillon Sunrise" and "Shores Of A Cosmic Ocean" are played entirely on keyboards and are a bit too new-agey for my taste), the closing track, "Sorrow In A World Of Darkness", is ten minutes long, and it just drags a bit in places. I appreciate what Mosher is doing, but sometimes I just wish he'd rock out a little more, and not make the songs so long. Less instros would help, too.

That doesn't mean, however, that there weren't some cool tunes on here. I liked "The Human Machine", a rockin' sci-fi tune about the classic "man vs. machine" theme, where Corsa sings in a deep, scary voice, for once not sounding like Geddy! I also enjoyed "Re-Define", which is very Rush-like, and the title track was enjoyable, too. As I said, Scott Mosher is a very talented individual. He just needs to write more actual SONGS, have more guitar (he's a very good player, so he should put more of it in his music), less instrumentals, more singing, and slightly shorter songs and albums and he'll be all set. I suppose the kind of thing he's doing is what progressive music is all about, but all the same, with a talent like his, he could show the world what he can do without overindulging.

### BATTLEHELM ONLINE:

It's so easy to compare anything slightly progressive to Dream Theater simply because they are the ones who set the standard for progressive metal. And while "Virtuality" by Scott Mosher doesn't really sound like Dream Theater they are the first band that comes to mind. This is basically a metal album but with a slightly different twist. Try imagining ambient music played by a metal band being somewhat influenced by Dream Theater. Then turn that up by ten and you might get some sort of idea of what this album sounds like. It might sound like the weirdest combination but it works magic. This is one of the best albums I've heard in a very long time (and yes, I've heard Dream Theater's new "Six Degrees Of Inner Turbulence" and love it). It's one of those you-have-to-hear-it-to-believe-it albums that are so rare and therefor should be treasured so much more.

### BELGIUM MUSIC SCENE:

Virtuality: Already a dozen years that the American guitarist Scott Mosher officiates in the world of the music. It is in 1996 that it leaves its first album solo, "Ambient Earth". Here who defines the catch already well. Very implied in environmental problems, Scott Mosher uses his music and sound another work of graphic designer to let it know and thus test to imply more its compatriots in the field. Here are which is not easy thing This "Virtuality" left in 2001. It is about the second opus solo of Scott Mosher. Environments are extremely impregnated by a certain new-age and of sonorities planing such as offered Tangerine Dream of it. However, as a guitarist, our catch gives to all that colors plus metal and even progressive. This opus, in majority instrumental, leaves despite everything the place to one singer. Mosher, which ensures some vocal well, called upon one certain Todd Corsa who also splits solo of guitar. All the sequences and the percussions are of Scott himself. On the passages more progressive metal, one feels the same one environment that on old Ayreon what is rather flattering. the most atmospheric moments hold as for them so much German of Tangerine Dream that arrangements of Alan Parsons without their symphonic side. There is sometimes the impression of to walk in a deep space. This second opus of Scott Mosher will interest the amateurs of environments metal progressive soaked with Ambient. Per moment precisely it is perhaps there that bottom wounds. Too much Ambient gives him a climate exceeded, but let us not forget that this album is already 5 years old.

### CANADIAN ASSAULT:

SCOTT MOSHER "Virtuality" Full Length Demo CD '02 Scott showcases that he is a supremely talented musician. It's a pity though the spectacular progressive power metal ambience is affected in the worst of ways by HEAVY synths, goth & techno elements! A pity indeed! The vocals, which I really like, sound like a mix of Geddy Lee & Urban Breed. <5/10> ~ Dale

### CHAOTIC CRITIQUES:

Virtuality is self-described as "ambient, neo-progressive cyber rock," and that description is pretty much bang-on. As the description indicates, Virtuality shifts between keyboard-generated ambience and progressive rock. For lack of a better comparison, envision a mixture of Rush with late 80s Pink Floyd, and you should be on the right track. This is music which obviously requires patience and attentiveness in order to appreciate, as its complex structures and willingness to explore ambient and new age passages at length imposes considerable demands upon the listener. Of course, demanding albums usually prove to be quite rewarding, and that is the case with Virtuality. One moment plumbing the relaxing depths of a synth soundscape, the next rocking along to some sweet guitar licks and Geddy Lee-styled vocals, Scott Mosher's vision traverses two challenging forms of music with considerable success. The general tenor of the music is fairly calm, with even the progressive rock elements encircled by the omnipresent keyboard work, which performs different roles at different points in the album; one moment, it is reinforcing the other instruments with layers of atmosphere and, at another moment, it is playing a more up-front role similar to that normally heard in progressive rock like Kansas or Yes. Ultimately, the fluidity of composition and the extensive synthesizer work proves to be both a gift and a curse for Virtuality. It's a gift because it makes for an almost aqueous listening experience, moving through different mental states according to a soundtrack, much like the protagonist in Pink Floyd's The Wall. It is a curse because the excessive use of electronic instrumentation robs the album of its organicism at times, giving it that artificial symphonia of late 80s progressive rock - not necessarily a bad thing, mind you, but this problem could be mitigated with a wider range of keyboard textures and techniques and allowing the guitars to speak unaccompanied more frequently. Despite this, the concept, songwriting, and musicianship on Virtuality are quite exquisite - this album may not have a hard edge, it may not reach out and take an aggressive swipe at your jugular, but it is quite absorbing and enthralling in its own right.

### CIRCLE MAGAZINE:

Call it spacey, call it celestial, call it anything but predictable. Scott Mosher's third release, Virtuality, is a unique blend of musical imagery and personal philosophies which invite the listener to venture on a pleasant cruise. The entire CD, composed and performed by the artist himself, was recorded at Freedom of Speech recording studios.

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 4

If such a term as cyber-rock exists, it might help describe where in the rock spectrum Mosher's work fits. Superb guitars back the 12 cuts on this CD that range from peacefully mellow, as in the 5th cut (an instrumental), Attilion Sunrise, to highly energetic, as in the 4th cut, A Season of Fire. Assisting Mosher, are guitarists Todd Corsa and Mickey James in cuts 7 and 9. The mixture of vocals and grandly cosmic instrumentals are strategic in the type of audience this CD should draw.

Many of Mosher's worldly philosophies are evident throughout the lyrics, "sometimes we hide - our humanity/ within the worlds - of reality/ and sometimes we share - ideology/ and find ourselves - in perfect symmetry," Re-Define, cut 6. "A true decision forms a new condition/ without illusion of time - or anarchy/ Like vivid dreaming with a hidden meaning/ reflects a state of mind - or reality," The Promise of Truth, cut 9. Virtuality is a wholly enjoyable CD that calls to the soul and the mind with its "celestial" music and lyrics. If you enjoy groups like the Moody Blues or Journey, then come along for the flight. You'll find yourself picturing vivid sunsets or a trip to the stars, Mosher's stars - via guitars. It's quite a ride, and one not to miss.

### DELIRIUM MAGAZINE:

Virtuality features twelve tracks that will greatly appeal fans of progressive rock. If you like guitar leads and vocals in the progressive rock vein akin to greats like Rush, Fates Warning, Dream Theater, than Scott Mosher is for you. Personally, this is not the type of music I listen to, but I can tell when an artist has talent and Scott Mosher is no exception. He has a vision and carries it throughout the entire album offering you a trip into his world filled with soundscapes that encompass techno-trance, ambient and even new age. When I first saw the artwork I thought of Fear Factory for some reason, but that was just in a visual sense and before I listened to the record I thought it was going to be an industrial album. I enjoy the instrumental compositions that come and go, and the songs vibrantly connect and gracefully flow from one song to the next. Mosher touches on many concepts from realms of the sociological, political, and environmental philosophies. I give this CD a thumbs up if you like this type of music.

### DIRT CULTURE:

VIRTUALITY is a self-financed CD from musical wiz Scott Mosher. It is a surprisingly great work of art. Scott says to file the CD under ambient, neo-progressive cyber-rock, which to me, usually means to file it at the back of the CD rack. This is different. The music is pretty heavy and there is some real good guitar work on it. It's like the heaviness of Rush meets the progressiveness of Yes. There is lots of programmed stuff, but it blends in well. As well as doing practically everything on the CD, Scott also designed the package for the CD which is great. Scott is quite the established graphic artist as well as an awesome musician. The majority of the CD is instrumental. If you're up for something different, hook up to Scott's email and get VIRTUALITY.

### DIVERTIGO (STEVE):

I've played your disc, Virtuality, several times throughout the week. I've listened to it in the car, at work, at home and on headphones. I was pleased firstly to see the packaging, a very well executed design and print. I know what goes into it, as I've done my own work as well (I remember using Corel Photo Paint 5 and running the bmp files to a Kinko's copy center to print out the booklets my first CD effort in 1997). I was pleased at the onslaught of wording and imagery provided by the booklet. Full-on professional job! I then thumbed through the booklet as I popped in the disc, eager to hear the full length versions of the analog synth fueled splendor I'd come to know from the samples on your website. I was not disappointed. Let us begin with a track breakdown.

1. Upon the Frontiers of Infinite Night - The swelling and droning of the first track gets my attention and then I'm further pulled in by the synth arpeggio.. then the drums fill drops in, leading to the first riff and setting what is to be the tone and instrumentation for much of the record.
2. Virtuality - Man.. I love the sound of analog synth melodies and arpeggiation, especially when not used to produce dance music. You introduce the track with the synth and then break in with a simple, clear beat and nice, active bass line with a pleasant popping. The subtle guitar layers are nice. Your voice then surfaces for the first time. Clear, accurate and melodic. You



have the ability to convey the serious lyrical matter with a sage attitude/tone in your voice. Very effective. The guitar solo is pretty busy, but not overwhelming, exploitative of technique, or what I would call a "jerk-off solo". It moves around enough to keep the attention without obscuring the melodic and harmonic ideas at hand. One thing I wish were different is the handling of the vocals that come in afterward. I can easily tell where the edit points are and it affects the fluidity of the song for me. Nevertheless, a bold vibrato sustain on the voice leads to a rhythm change up and guides me back into the main riff. Since I like the riff so much, the fade out works nicely. Nice work.

3. The Human: Machine - You have a pleasing command of synth arrangement. Again, following the formula of beginning the song with a synth hook and later introducing the band is pulled off nicely. The processed, speaking voice surprised me the first time around and I found it intriguing.. but then you come in with the vocal harmonies in response to it.. I LOVE the way that sounds. It's just a vocals moment on the records where the chosen harmony, the sound of your voices, the lyrical content and the phonetics of the words all intersect and work really nicely. You then come in with a low, detuned (or 7string) that I find very satisfying and expressive, as I'm a fan of really heavy material. One of my favorite tracks on this record. My only squabble is that at 4:43, you have a rhythmic synth pattern come in that seems out of rhythm.

4. A Season of Fire - Once again, kicking things off with the synth. For a time, I looped this track and didn't listen to any of the others because I was addicted to the main riff. I love the way you bring in the high strings and introduce some other synth sounds. I love the way you change the mood and break things down later on with the bass and synth. One thing I tend to wish for on this one is a bit more variation on some of the chord progressions, but that is highly subjective. I also wish the fade out was a but more smooth and maybe a bit reverberated.

5. Atillion Sunrise - Nice Pad work.

6. Re-Define - Meant as a compliment: a great pop song. By now I can't deny the likeness of your voice to a certain Canadian bassist, but it does not in any way assault the integrity of the song and maintains its own identity. I like the way you approach the pop form.. Nice verses, injecting counterpoint with the vocals. A nice pre-chorus and memorable, meaningful chorus. This is one my favorites and is certainly my favorite lyric. I like the modulation in that one particular synth sound you chose.

7. The Dreaming Eye - And on with another synth intro. You've not bored me with any of these. You develop the song and then change up into what I assume is 'The Heart of Mind' with chordal grace and further synth themes. A token moment on the CD in my view. You inject a lot of change melodic ideas and hooks and they usually seems to flow together nicely in the song, even though the melodies may seem to have no relation to one another. I'm pleased at the end when you've chose to lead back into that same chord idea at the end of the guitar solo that I liked so much earlier on. The drum programming does indeed at times lend itself to more unpredictable, progressive patterns. I'd like to see you continue on this path and expand on this in future endeavours with some more complex rhythm parts that still keep the flow of the song but have a progressive element to them. Perhaps working in some unpredictable toms or splash cymbals.

8. Sometime After Midnight - Cool ideas. What really adds the right touch for me on this one is the pitch bending and modulation on the synth. I like the slower part toward the end. You use a synth sound that reminds me of "I'll wait" by Van Halen. Being in tune with so much music over the years. I could name lots of songs I love that have used some similar analog synth sounds as many of your tunes.. that's probably just another subconscious factor that draws me to it.

9. The Promise of Truth

Like re-define, a pop form completely ready for radio airplay. Somewhat of an 80's feel for me, especially with the synth arpeggios. Nothing I have a gripe about!. Your voice has a different feel here, will an almost Jimi Jameson (sp) quality (the dude from Survivor). This one is noticeable more progressive the re-define. Nice swelling pads on the bass breakdown.

10. Shores of a Cosmic Ocean - Great pad work. I like this better than Atillion.

11. Infinity Burns - Intro reminds me of some of the old new age synth stuff, like Kitaro and such. Highly atmospheric. When the song is on the brink of loosing its luster for me, the pitch bend synths come in and save the day. Placed nicely.

12 Sorrow in a World of Darkness - You aren't about to run out of ideas on me another great synth introduction and then off to a nice vocal passage. The arpeggio you've chosen is still hypnotic even 6 minutes into the song with it surfaces alone and finally changes. By this point in the song I really feel that something epic and grandiose is trying to be conveyed. And in comes the

voice, projecting the song's meaning. I like the vocal performance and melodic a lot. The double bass was a nice, fitting touch! And on to introspection Leaving the sonic image of your synth syle burned into my mind at the end of the disc.

Production - I see you've gotten someone to engineer this project for you. Undoubtedly this was an excellent choice. It's not an easy thing to mix synth layers with guitar. I don't feel like any of your compositional skills or ideas are being obscured by the production. It's very clean and polished. Wish I could say the same for my stuff, I need to move my production up a notch.

One thing I'm not crazy about is that your hi-hats and ride cymbals sometimes seem to be panned hard, almost or all of the way over to the left or right. Most synths allow you to set the pan for these. This slight change could make a big difference. To be honest, it's the only thing that really drives me nuts about the record. I don't know you all that well, Scott, but I feel that you have successfully channeled your thoughts and ideologies into a piece of work. Not a song, not a single image, but an entire comprehensive CD effort. This is something most artist works a long time to accomplish, a set of works that are all solid and true. This is probably the most impressive factor of the disc: that the body of work is consistent as a whole and is noticeably reflective of the artwork and lyrics. It is an effort of performance, composition and production to keep the record solid and consistent. What's more, is that your electronic influence is very keen and authentic, not like a rock guy wanted to dick around with synths. You possess a good ear for electronic music and use these elements with a progressive rock style. Successfully. If you were standing across from me, I'd shake your hand on a job well done. I hope that you have in some way found my feedback pleasant or useful.

### DUTCH PROGRESSIVE ROCK PAGES:

Scott Mosher is an independent American artist. His new album, *Virtuality*, seems to be a labour of love in many ways. The album was self-financed, Mosher played most of the instruments himself, and also did the beautiful artwork. I have always been a lover of science fiction stories and futuristic concept albums. So when I got *Virtuality*, I was very pleasantly surprised. The album has a very convincing futuristic concept album feel! The vocals, melodies and overall atmosphere reminded me strongly of my three favourite Rush songs (*Subdivisions*, *The Camera Eye*, *Red Sector A*). This album has exactly the same "high tech sound": electronic, heavy and overwhelmingly progressive. The sound is quite "digital", with all these electronic drums and many sequenced synthesizers. But this cool and sterile sound works very well with the warm bass work, the heavy guitars and the powerful vocals. Half of the album are vocal tracks, with several movements, and mostly linked together with instrumental parts. The compositions are all very strong and well balanced. Most of the vocal tracks sound very Rush-like, like *The Promise of Truth*, *Re-define* and *Virtuality*. These are all sung by Tod Corso (nicknamed "Shreddy Gee"). Sometimes, the music of Ayreon comes to mind, like in *The Human Machine*, with Scott's own processed vocals. Most of the instruments are played by Scott Mosher, but there is a very convincing "band sound". I particularly liked the way all kinds of sequencers and synthesizers are used in the foreground of the mix, as a full fledged part of the "band" sound. But no "romantic" or "dreamy" pieces here: it's all energetic and full of power. Every track is written and played in a complex and colourful prog rock style, with a heavy approach, but never hard rock or metal. *Virtuality* is a great album. I can highly recommend it to everyone who likes Rush, Ayreon, or the melodic side of Queensryche or Dream Theater. It might be hard to find in the shops, as it is mainly distributed by the internet. For ordering info (and sound bites) check out the links above. (9/10 stars)

### DURP REVIEWS:

A beautifully designed CD came in from the USA. SCOTT MOSHER has put together a solo release, melting the worlds of ambient electronic, melodic progressive rock, soft progressive metal, trance and a bit new age. Imagine what would result if you combine german ambient artist SHAMALL with PINK FLOYD, DEVIN TOWNSEND and COSMIC BABY. *Virtuality* will stun fans of ambient electro and floydish soft progmetal. *Human machine* is a heavy track, especially suitable for fans of DEVIN TOWNSEND and AYREON. *A season of fire* is a dramatic and exciting soundtrack piece ... calling BLADERUNNER-like pictures of future cities in your mind. *Atillon sunrise* is a beautiful instrumental hymn, carried by soft and comfortable synthesizer. The vocals are nothing spectacular, but they fit the comfortable music very, very good. After 2/3 of the album the synthetic drumming starts to make me miss something special and the album begins to lack of melodic highlights. Unfortunately the album can't hold what

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 7

the first 3 great tracks were promising. Overall this album features good electronic and ambient carpets as well as strong and intelligently used guitars. This is a promising release and a journey through time and space ... (6 points/10)

### EER MUSIC REVIEW:

North Carolina guitarist Scott Mosher describes his music as “ambient neo-progressive cyber rock.” His self-released second CD, *Virtuality*, mixes all of these styles in twelve tracks of instrumental and vocal music. The songs range broadly in style and length, including ambient instrumentals like “Upon the Frontiers of Infinite Night,” synth interludes like “Attillion Sunrise,” long prog-rock tunes like the title track, and trance-rock soundscapes like “The Human Machine.” Most of the songs feature extended vamps, often as faded outros and occasionally as faded intros, and static drumbeats. The wide stylistic variety and the long arrangements leave *Virtuality* feeling more like a series of sonic experiments rather than a coherent musical statement. The skillful guitar work includes solos by Mosher and lead vocalist Todd Corsa. The guitar tones are first-rate, and the synth tones support the songwriting well. The synth percussion carries the ambient tracks, but the programmed drums on the rock tracks use dated samples programmed in bland drumbeats. Aside from the drums on the rock tracks, the production and mix on *Inferno* are pro quality. The long songs in different styles on *Virtuality*, and the long CD length at 72 minutes, show Scott Mosher honing his musical focus. His 2004 follow-up CD, *Inferno*, zeros in on tighter song arrangements in the ambient-meets-prog-metal style. Fans of more experimental ambient-metal might check out *Virtuality*, but listeners interested in a more coherent overall CD should check out *Inferno*. Reviewed by Scott Andrews

### ELECTRIC BASEMENT:

Despite the name, this is not a TRASH album! Quite the opposite, it is a highly intellectual, layered creation, expanding across the sonic Universe almost effortlessly. Infused with synthesized keyboards, sound effects, carefully spaced guitar riffs and clean vocals, this could easily be a dry prog experience, but it retains an earthiness amidst the sci-fi atmosphere. Still, one gets the sense they are taking in *Star Trek* more than *Star Wars*. Indeed, this is as cerebral as it is aural. The title track marches on, but not forcefully. It is simply determined with a matter-of-fact delivery and overall restrained approach.

“The Human: Machine” is one of the stars here. Dense, epic and perfect for the headsets, it skips about quickly then stops for some appropriate sound effects or strange voices. You may want to think of this as a modern, slightly metallic *War of the Worlds*. Not that the theme itself is a parallel per se, but the overall feel is as such. We are not experiencing anything small, whether it be the symbolism of politics and cyborgs, or the sprawling vistas of the music itself or even the artwork, which is a fine companion. This means the casual or impatient listener may not have the hunger to sit this one out and will certainly not seek this when cruising down the highway on a Saturday night. Also, there is not a definitive track, but rather several very solid ones that are linked as a sum of something larger. For fans of prog, concept albums and science fiction. - (Brian Coles)

### EUPHONY MAGAZINE:

Mixing Rush and Dream Theater, electronica/trance and rock grooves, along with an atmosphere almost gothic, Scott Mosher has created a tasty and interesting CD. My own preferences for rock and metal incline me to really like the opening instrumental, “Upon the Frontiers of Infinite Night” and the second song, (with its Geddes-like vocals) “Virtuality”. In both these songs, the atmospheric nature of the music is anchored by solid drumming, which made my toes start tapping. “Virtuality” is a dance song, as well as a listenable one, and I wouldn’t be surprised to see it turn up in dance clubs, although it has a passage in the middle that totally changes the feel and pace of the song, after which it then returns to its hypnotic rhythms.

Scott is primarily a guitarist but there is little guitar grandstanding on the CD... only a flow of music that blends seamlessly in each song. Vocal duties are handled by Todd Corsa. The CD’s experimental nature is highlighted in the 3rd and 7th songs, respectively, (“The Human: Machine” and “The Dreaming Eye”), where the vocals include deep gruff spoken passages punctuated by hooky singing and passionate passages. The music itself remains consistent throughout the CD, regardless of vocal experiments, always



maintaining an attractive rhythm, and a trance type feel. "Season of Fire" has incredible instrumental passages, often classical in feel--like listening to a symphony orchestra. "Atillon Sunrise" falls to a mournful and beautiful rhythm and I flashed on Orpheus descending to the underworld to look for his lost love. I love it. "Re-Define" is so Rush-like it was uncanny. A hooky song, the composition closest to traditional on the CD, the one song where Scott may be said to show off his nimble fingers most. "Sorrow in a World of Darkness" could almost be music to travel across space to: ala Star Wars and Star Trek--it has such an otherworldly feel.

Not music to mosh to, no, but music to work to...music that sharpens your brain and lightens the doing of tedious chores. The elements blended here may make the CD hard for labels and promoters to categorize but take nothing away from the enjoyment of it. I really don't need my music to fit a defined niche in order to decide if I want to play something often. Do you? Scott himself, on the CD cover, suggests, "File this under ambient, neo-progressive cyber-rock" and that will do as well as any other definition. This intelligent music allows you bring your own ideas to the songs and the rhythms are more likely to soothe than enrage, but I doubt anyone would call this ebb and flow of melody and trance boring. It is a lovely gem. Check it out for yourself. The CD, with its extensive booklet that perfectly reflects the music, is available through Scott's website: THE AMBIENT MIND. - (Bonita Berger, 8/10 review)

### EXPLICITLY INTENSE MAGAZINE:

Scott Mosher has been crankin' out progressive-tinged recordings since who knows when, but VIRTUALITY is his most mature work to date. The ability of VIRTUALITY to transport the listener to futuristic lands covered with musical instruments, nuclear powerplants and buildings even mightier than the once goliath World Trade Center spring to mind. The musicianship here is top notch, with slight hints of Yes, Genesis, Asia and ELP, but with a Y2K edge. Progressive Rock freaks, you'd be seriously insane to pass this one up! - Sarjoo Devani

### EXPOSE MAGAZINE, #23, 2001:

Counting both solo and collaborative projects, as well as cassette demons, VIRTUALITY is Scott Mosher's sixth release. The jewel case liner jokingly instructs stores to file this under "ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock" but in fact, that's an apt description of the music (although I would also add metal to the label). VIRTUALITY isn't a concept album in the strict sense of the word, although it is lyrically, musically, and even visually (Mosher did the graphic design himself) united by a philosophical - and at times mystical - concern with the shifting boundaries between man and machine, nature and technology, as well as our individual selves and the greater cosmos of which we are but part. The overall mood of VIRTUALITY is futuristic - an affect that Mosher achieves by combining the traditions of progressive metal with electronic and ambient music. Electric guitar and sequenced synthesizer are predominant here, with percussion (usually programmed) taking a secondary, supportive role. Vocals (often electronically distorted) are featured in about half the songs. The more conventional of the CD's 12 tracks, like "Re-Define", sound like 80's-era Rush, a similarity that is accentuated by singer Todd Corso's Geddy Lee-ish voice. Others, like "The Human: Machine" sound a bit like the wilder material on Queensrÿche's RAGE FOR ORDER. The most innovative tracks, though, are the instrumentals like "Season of Fire" and "Infinity Burns" which combine the metallic guitar motifs and solos with trance-like pulses of sequenced synths, and "Atillon Sunrise", one of two beautiful and meditative ambient pieces. Recommended.

### FIREWORKS MAGAZINE 5/2002

This is a difficult album to review. First off, there's Scott's unfortunate surname. I gotta admit, when I received the album through the post my initial thought was that this was going to be a thrash metal workout. How wrong can one be? What we have here is a very intelligent, deeply thoughtout work of art. The tracks are split between vocal and instrumental, but every track is an aural experience. The best way to describe the tracks is to imagine an ambient keyboard score, almost movie soundtrack in feel and not dissimilar to Jean Michael Jarre's 'Oxygene' album, but with power-chords and hard rock drumming, albeit, programmed. Mosher is responsible for all the programming, sequencing, and most of the guitars. The funny thing is, listening to the vocal tracks made me think of Rush. Checking the credits the vocals are done by one Todd 'Shreddy Gee' Corsa, so I guess



## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 9

the Rush comparison is pretty accurate. Definitely an album for late night listening. Put on, lie back and de-stress... kinda like the rock equivalent of the video fishtank! On the back sleeve it's stated 'File Under: Ambient neo-progressive cyber rock'. And, to be honest, that's about the best description you could get. Not for everyone, but definitely worth a listen if you're into any of the above music styles.

### FRIDAY THE 13th:

OK, so what is this I am about to review? Is this guy's name for real? Well his guy is called Scott Mosher (maybe he invented ? moshing!!), any how I was not sure to what this album was all about when I first saw the cover, which reminded me of a soundtrack for the film 'Blade Runner', but I am pleased to say this is something slightly different in the form of Rock/ Metal music. Nevertheless, this is something different and quiet pleasing to the ears to be honest. I would have to say that this is Cyber/ Futuristic Metal with a difference. If you like any of the following bands then I'm sure you will enjoy this album, although this album has 50% singing and the rest is instrumental I will leave it up to you to decide if this is worth a listen. Any how if you like 'Heir Apparent', 'Dark Star', 'Eye Of The Storm', 'Greyhaven' & 'Digital Ruin' then this could be right up your street. 12 trax here and Scott handles most of the instruments and all the vocals with the help of 2 friends and a nice production does help. Check out the following trax: 'Virtuality', 'The Human Machine', 'A Season Of Fire', 'Re- Define', 'Sometime After Midnight', 'Shores Of a Cosmic Ocean' and 'Sorrow In A World Of Darkness'. (3/5 points)

### GOODTIMES 8/2004:

The cover of Scott Mosher's VIRTUALITY CD may hit strangely close to home for many Long Islanders. His picture of a polluted night sky hovering over an expansive body of water heartlessly invaded by smoke-billowing industrial towers looks almost too much like that scene created by the similar towers that ruin the perfection of gazing across the Long Island Sound while waiting for the Port Jeff ferry. If you are a fan of the Bush administration, don't bother reading Mosher's rant on the back of the jacket. He's got strong love for the environment and doesn't shy away from getting political about it, both in his prose and in poetic lyrics. He argues that the "pro-corporate, pro-business anti-environmental administration" by maintaining the status quo, "pollute(s) our political systems with as much greed-induced fervor as any religious fanatic at a prostitution convention."

This is also not music for the close minded. Mosher, who performs not only guitar, percussion and occasional Darth Vader-esque morphed spoken word vocals, also programs all the sounds in this electronic-driven album. He considers his music "ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock", whatever that is. It's only slightly reminiscent of the Mars Volta, and other recent prog-rock, and certainly more twisted.

A key track to check out is the title track, in which vocalist Todd Corso's high-pitched, intense voice asks "Do we perceive while we try to conceive/the business of greed that is planting the seed/and let the government hide all the lies that decide/in the future will anyone care?" as Mosher provides an equally intense instrumental buildup including frequent rhythm changes and a Pink Floyd-style guitar solo. With various instrumental pieces and multi-part epic songs among the less "out there" tracks, the album flows like another DARK SIDE OF THE MOON but with a theme of the environment and the transcendent mind. Mosher carries a positive message with him, especially on tracks like "The Promise of Truth" which pumps you up as much as the ROCKY theme song yet is peaceful and optimistic. To discover more about this intellectual progressive musician, visit his website. He's just released a new CD, but VIRTUALITY is definitely worth checking out when you've got the 72-minutes of listening time it requires. This album sucks you in and makes you forget there's such a thing as the "pause" button.

### GNOSIS REVIEW:

You know, there are quite a few good things I could say about Scott Mosher's Virtuality, but before I do so, I gotta get something out the way. Lose the drum machines. Despite the fact that there are a lot of really nice touches on this album musically (a title that almost sounds like a modern day sequel to Rush's Signals), when you have this kind of toneless plodding going on,

you can't help but be defined and limited by it. And it's a shame because there are some real strengths here, especially in the programming that occasionally reminds me of the full, warm background drop of Ozric Tentacles, a sound that moves this into deep space, despite the fact that this is the deep space of "Cygnus X-1" as opposed to "Sunscape." And why isn't the guitar playing more prevalent on it? Mosher is \*damn\* good on the axe and each solo is totally compelling. More! The vocals are provided by one Todd "Shreddy Gee" Corsa. So I suppose I will not get in trouble calling this guy a Geddy Lee (circa early 80s) clone (although he sounds a lot like Triumph's Rik Emmett as well). However, there aren't a lot of vocals over the longer stretch. The full album is dominated by mostly, synth heavy symphonic rock, and we're talking layers of lush keys. Make no mistake about it, Mosher's sound is very full and layered, and it is this that sets it apart from similar one-man operations. Overall this is a musically mixed bag, from the disappointing (I admit to loathing drum machines and gated drums) to the simply outstanding (the synth programming/ambience and the guitar playing). I imagine fans of Rush-influenced, modern techno-progressive bands would probably find this a worthy purchase.

### GUITAR NINE REVIEW:

You mean you don't know what ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock sounds like? Pick up a copy of Scott Mosher's CD *Virtuality* for a first-class introduction to the new sub-genre. Mosher is a guitarist, bass player, keyboard player and more, and his vision for progressive rock includes haunting sound paintings and dreamy musical interludes (a la Tangerine Dream), as well as driving, rhythmic metal.

His guests include vocalist Todd Corsa, who sings on half of the twelve tracks, and Mickey James, who lends a bass solo to "The Promise Of Truth". Mosher's guitar solos are fully supportive of the underlying compositions, offering dense, fluid runs and liquid lines. Fellow progressive axemen will find a lot to like in *Virtuality*, as well as ambient music lovers searching for more of an edge. A great soundtrack for travelling in space - don't board the Enterprise without it.

Scott's current status as a 'solo-artist' began with the "Ambient Earth" CD. in 1995, the "Horsemeat" cassette (grammy award winning!) and various 'guest' appearances on bass, lyrical arrangements and guitar on the F5/Eye of the Storm projects. Currently he has not toured the world, he has not won an MTV musical award, he has not been featured in any pop-culture revival metal magazines, he has not been a guest host on any late-night TV programs (although he did lobby the Arsenio Hall Show in 1990 as the 'doomed-to-a-life-of-mediocrity guy' to no avail), nor has he kissed many hands and shaken many babies (that may change soon). Scott has yet to win a Nobel Peace Prize or a Pulitzer prize (not for trying). Mosher is currently working on other experimental proto-electronic, trance-rock rap-funk-metal endeavors, and continues his quest to combine his music and art with a socially-conscious and environmentally responsible approach.

### IMPACT PRESS REVIEW:

This is quite the impressive recording, considering that Mosher played almost all instruments and did the singing. The back cover says to file this under "ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock." I'm not sure about the ambient, but I agree with everything else. I felt the influence of Yngwie Malmsteen and Rush, as well as Tangerine Dream if you can imagine. The Mosher designed cover art is worthy of a Yes album. There are plenty of keyboards, mostly playing repeating patterns that bring on a hypnotic feeling, and guitars playing energetic, driving riffs. (AL)

### INFEST ZINE:

This is a rarity that I received of this musician's whose work in loner is captured in this disc full with textures and melodies guided to the progressive music hands. This work fuses diverse such styles as the progressive ROCK, techno-trance and music new Age. Scott Mosher is the one in charge of all the instruments: Guitar, under, keyboard, percussion, programming and voices. Also having invited musicians. We can notice certain influences of bands like DREAM THEATER, RUSH and even PINK FLOYD (Era Sid barret), united this to near textures to the Gothic music and inclusive astral atmospheres that easily guide the listener

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 11

for an imaginary world, which SCOTT has looked for to express through the illustrations that it adorn the booklet. A disc with a total of 12 topics that it will wake up diverse sensations in the listener.

### INSIDE CONNECTION MAGAZINE (01/2002)

With the first glance at the CD liner art of a guru wolf holding out two crystal balls in each paw under a headline reading 'Go beyond the ambient mind', you know you're in the right place to have your mind blown. A definite progressive/alternative release, Scott Mosher's VIRTUALITY portrays a zen-like feel, showing it's obvious dichotomy in both musicianship and lyrics. The title song possesses a definite Peter Gabriel/Queensryche sound, has a steady rock drumbeat throughout, and maintains a 1970's punk feel combined with a sense of confusion and corporate angst. 'ReDefine' is a punk-rock anthem as it chants, 'Redefine your mind, redefine your place, redfine your time, redefine your space, redfine your lives'. Backed on one tune on vocals and guitar by Todd Corsa and on another tune on bass by Mickey James, Mosher handles everything: percussion, sequencing, programming, guitar, voices. All in all, this is a great CD; lyrically and musically. Check it out.

### 10 PAGES REVIEW:

Often, music is categorised to help potential buyers on their way which style they are dealing with. This CD is named as "ambient, neo-progressive cyber-rock". According to the information in the booklet the musician concerned, Scott Mosher, will even go further on his next record with "proto-electronic trance-rock- rap-funk-metal". We shall hear. The idea behind this CD was to make a mixture between a certain view on music, the world and other arts. The cover, a futuristic design by Mosher himself, is very good. The album is almost a soloproject: Mosher plays most of the guitars, all keyboards and he programmed the drums. I must say, that I like the music a lot. In my ears it sounds like a mix between symphonic rock and spacerock. The CD opens impressive with the spacey, Ozric Tentacles-like, Upon The Frontiers Of Infinite Night. This piece moves into the fantastic symphonic titletrack in which there is excellent vocalwork by Todd Corsa. He is nicknamed "Shreddy Gee" and this gives a hint how his voice sounds, namely as that of Rush-vocalist Geddy Lee. A big part of the CD is instrumental and thrusting. Sometimes the music slows down as in the floating Atillon Sunrise and Shores Of A Cosmic Ocean. Corsa again sings re-Define and The Promise Of Truth. These tracks would easily be fitted on a Rush-CD out of the eighties. Only the drums sound different (more metallic). Pieces as The Dreaming Eye and Infinity Burns refer to the music of Tangerine Dream because of the nice sequencerlines but with a more heavy impact. Sorrow in A World Of Darkness is a massive epic symphonic track with very well played guitarsolos. This is a great CD from a versatile artist.

### JEN'S METAL PAGE:

Virtuality is Scott Mosher's second full-length, released three years before Inferno came out. There are many keyboard sounds on this CD as well, though they are a bit less ambient and more electronic. The music here, described as 'cyber rock' by Mosher, is also a bit guitar heavier than his latest CD. A lot of the keyboards reminded me of Pink Floyd on Dark Side of the Moon. Todd Corsa contributes lead vocals and a guitar solo to one track. Mosher adds more cyber elements to his music with some vocal effects. The artwork Mosher designed for the liner notes is even more profound than it is on Inferno; there is one piece with pyramids resting on an ocean with a moon on the horizon and an array of stars that is particularly breathtaking to see. Most of these songs can also be previewed at the official Ambient Mind site. Mosher is planning to release a new CD either in 2005 or 2006. Visit the site for more information.

### KNAC RADIO ONLINE REVIEW:

Raleigh, NC native Scott Mosher has created an awesome industrial soundscape entitled "Virtuality." When I first received this album, I was immediately impressed with the CD art depicting dark pollution spewing forth from smokestacks amidst a spectrum of color set in a hazy futuristic world. Labeled as "ambient, neo-progressive cyber rock," I found this work very intriguing and far from cursory. There are twelve tracks, each carefully constructed and thought-provoking. Vocals are provided by Todd Corsa, who sounds like Geddy Lee from Rush. So much so that I thought it was Geddy. Only six tracks have singing at

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 12

all. The others are instrumentals that put you in a trance and take your mind on the trip of a lifetime through a haunting yet beautiful ride into deep space. Scott makes extensive use of keyboards and programming that would put most prog masters to shame. There is an over the top guitar solo on "A Season of Fire," that is very reminiscent of Queensryche as are many of the solos. I'd try to compare this to other prog music but am not schooled enough to give a fair analysis. Maybe Dream Theater, Rush or Floyd. The music is very mood orientated. I felt like I was in a science fiction thriller like Blade Runner or Escape from New York, running for my life from unseen evil forces hot in pursuit. I faced fear, excitement and even relaxation as I floated aimlessly on this adrenalin laced acid trip. Overall, this is some excellent music. To categorize it as metal would probably be an injustice because it is so much more. If you don't mind seven-minute songs and minimal vocal contributions in an electronic "mindfield," than Virtuality is right up your alley. It is the epitome of progressive rock.

### **LAMENTATIONS OF THE FLAME PRINCESS #9, Dec 18, 2001:**

Here is an artist that takes his work seriously and respects it. Professionally pressed CD, great sound thick booklet with excellent graphics, full lyrics, notes, references, the whole thing, right here in my hand. Not that it means it's worth getting (although in this case it is and I'll tell you why in a moment), but if one man can put something like this together then all of you four or five piece bands who can't really do seem like whiny pussies. Achievement standards are set by those possessed, not by those who say 'enough is enough' and are bound by the restrictions of 'common sense'.

So anyway, this is a progressive projects (not metal) dealing with sound atmosphere and built around keyboards and such, and propelled through its phases by programmed rock drum beats, guitars, etc. The self-tagged 'Ambient neo-progressive cyber rock' actually fits dead on (and not that we should be surprised that artists actually know what their music should be called by you know those creative types and they feel about categorization...) and in my not-so-expert opinion on things not focused on guitars, I'd say think of calmer RUSH with a new age feel and you're halfway there. The other half, well, you need to invest some time in it, and be willing to just get lost. I've had this thing, what, a couple of months, and still don't have a goddam clue what to really describe this as. It's just good stuff. A lot of dreamy sleepy passages made solely on keyboards, offset by times when the more rock sections kick in with the guitars and probably the best thing about this CD is the lack of any one prevalent mood, any one thing that you can point to and say 'This defines what this project is all about'. And yet it's all coherent and focused. I wish more metal bands could be like that, because then I wouldn't have to dog the shit out of them sor sucking so bad.

Vocals pop up on some songs, and the vocalist's got a good voice that could be described as Geddy-Lee like, but near as high and think so that should save a few seizures. The lyrics also have a point, it's all got a point, again, where I call it 'new age' about being in tune with your mind and your surroundings, hardly a negative message in my book. The music isn't very happy in a lot of places though, probably reflecting that we just haven't gotten it right like we're supposed too. I'd say way too much thought went into every aspect of this, but that's a really silly thing to say, considering how little thought goes into most of the albums reviewed here. And musically, it's all done by one guy (save 3 solos). Aren't you jealous? You should be. Definitely great stuff in all aspects and I highly recommend you get your hands on this, but do you realize how absolutely more killer this would've been if the worst 25 minutes taken out, leaving only the most killer and quality 45-50 minutes to be heard? The only CD's that ever need to be over seventy minutes are freebie promotional CD's, people... but then again, that's my metal mind talking and I guess some of these pure atmospheric pieces don't follow the same rules as I've been observing and commenting on for years...

### **LEFT OF THE DIAL:**

Are you ready for a neo-ambient techno Rush? Scott Mosher's VIRTUALITY takes you on just such a musical journey with his subtly mind-tearing progressive rock, which combines various styles of audio artistry. "Virtuality merges the worlds of trance, ambient, new-age and metal forged in the fires of atmospheric neo-progressive song structures." Ok, that's quite a lot for most of us to bite off and chew without choking, but Mosher's third release is just that, and the only way to understand is to listen ? no, feel. Take a handful of Rush, a dash of Symphony X, a pinch of Enigma, and a heavy symphonic keyboard presence and you've got VIRTUALITY.



## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 13

Mosher is the main man behind the scenes here, playing just about every instrument, electronic or not, with the exception of some guitar solos by Todd Corsa on "Architects of the Divine" and Mickey James on "The Promise of Truth." Corsa is the main influence for the Rush sound. His voice seems to have replicated Rush's Geddy Lee so much that his nickname is "Shreddy Gee." While tracks like "The Human Machine" and "Redefine" are futuristically harmonic to the senses, other tracks seem overindulgent in length, and the use of electronic keyboards is at times a bit extensive. Don't get me wrong, the tracks are good, but a master of his craft knows when enough is enough. Take ATB for example, the ambient-house techno lord ? not many of his cuts are more than five minutes. Don't scrape our ears against the pavement. VIRTUALITY is an interesting combination of many musical influences and provides a unique edge that is not often seen in the world of progressive rock. Mosher seems to have created an identity all his own.

### LONG ISLAND MUSIC SCENE:

Here is something a little different. Mr. Mosher seems to have taken a little dose of Sci-Fi, Drama, The Future, and some other little spices of course to bring to the table what he calls.....VIRTUALITY. This cd clocks in over 70 mins. long. It definitely takes you on an epic little trip. The music paints many a splendid picture. It's dreamy and cosmic and very intriguing. Scott Mosher really doesn't rely so much on the vocal or the lyric to get his point across. With this disc, there is much more music than vocal, but it keeps you interested. He is definitely a creative and talented soul this Scott Mosher. I bet he watches Star Trek. The disc's layout and artwork is awesome. The recording is wonderful too. This is a nice little package. Everything is fine tuned and holds its own quite nicely. "The convergence of ambient neo-progressive cyber rock and atmospheric digital imagery with a philosophical perspective." Those are the words that are printed on the disc itself. Interesting huh? Wanna know more??...Visit [www.theambientmind.com](http://www.theambientmind.com)

### MANDRAGORA:

Self-proclaimed 'Dr Pepper Afficionado', Scott Mosher has an interesting release on his hands. While the overall vibe is very prog rockish, some parts are much heavier than you'd expect from prog rock and there are many electronic and looping elements more common to dance music. Dr. Mosher calls it 'ambient neo-progressive cyber rock'. Despite the uniqueness of this album, the overall orchestration feels formulaic and becomes irksome after several tracks. Every song seems to have the same beat (tempo and time signature) which makes the album seem to drone on. The other major problem with the construction is that most all the vocal lines are placed over a chord by either the guitar or synth that acts as a sort of pedal tone. There are exceptions to this, such as in parts of "Re-Define" but they are rare. The formula does work to bring the lyrics to the forefront but a single sustained type of stimulus causes the listener to become numb to it. Scott's talent as a visual artist is worth mentioning here as he put together quite a bit of art to produce one of the most elaborate booklets I've seen. IF you're looking for a unique disc, are intrigued by the fusion of prog and electronic or like to support independents, then pick this disc up, but I'm not sure who else it might appeal to.

### MARGEN MAGAZINE 02/2002:

Sci-fi-prog? Therefore surely, at least the conceptual line of this work follows this philosophy. There are here a lot of references of space rock, electronic and contemporary music... and melodic rock, sometimes in a metal vein that remind of Rush. Something new and vibrant, structured like tectonic plaques that move and collide each other provoking earthquakes of "cyber neo-progressive rock". Powerful and delicate at the same time because the production on this disc is very clean and crisp. Scott Mosher have produced an excellent and original album. Very good. - Marcos VARELA (margen #24)

### MEDIA READER:

MUSIC: Scott Mosher! What a name! Solo-artist self-proclaimed as 'ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock' (it says so ON the CD packaging!). While the '80's prog-rock genre has not particularly flooded enough turn-of-the-century contemporaries to render any cliché's, there's not much ground to break despite the technology jump from the 2600 to the X-box. During the

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 14

instrumentals, I feel like I'm watching an interlude moment in a really trying television episode of The Highlander. During the tracks with vocals I feel pretty much the same, but Rush's Geddy Lee is behind me whispering sweet nothings into my ear. Mosher's got an ear for leftist politics, mostly based on environmental issues. While it certainly adds an interesting twist to his delivery, I can't help but think of it as dogmatic rather than educational. (2/out of 4).

### DESIGN:

Scott Mosher! What a name! Also a self-proclaimed graphic artist, Mosher takes the liberty to grace us with Bladerunner-esque graphic paintings depicting the urban decay our world of SUV's, littering and general disrespect of Mama Earth will lead us to (or so says the essay entitled 'Virtuality: The Cover Concept... Go Behind the Ambient Mind' in the liner notes). There's a lot of smokestacks to pump one full of phallic imagery, lots of clouds and lots of space stuff. The center spread has lightning, pyramids, rings, stars, the ocean, and a bunch of other mystical stuff that's something I might get on a fantasy novel. On the inside back cover there's a wolf with a man's body sitting cross-legged on a lake balancing two globes, one in each hand. All the handiwork of Scott Mosher. (2/out of 4, for humor value?)

### METAL AGES:

The words I write will hardly do Scott Mosher's "Virtuality" album justice. Not that it's the greatest most superb piece of material to ever hit the music scene, but more so because of the time, energy, thought and absolute dedication that is evidently forged into this project. The liner notes themselves are a piece of work within itself. Scott not only composed and performed everything on this album (minus lead vocals, one guitar solo and one bass solo) but he also created all of the artwork for the CD. Multi-talented indeed. Combining art and music to bring forth his beliefs, opinions and general outlook on life itself, Scott serves up over 70 minutes of music to the masses.

The tongue-in-cheek genre description on the back of the CD, quite frankly, describes this album to a tee. It reads, "File under: Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber Rock." How's that for a description? I would even say throw some trance and electronica elements into the mix as well. The album is about half instrumental and at times reminds me of those videos you can buy in the store. You know, the ones where there are different 3D animations and sequences on the screen with the cool, relaxing ambient music in the background. Soothing.

For the songs that have vocals I liken them a lot to the band Rush. That's mainly due to the fact that vocalist Todd Corso has a heavy Geddy Lee influence, my opinion anyway. Scott even throws some heavily effect laden vocals into the song "The Human: Machine". With its unique verse/chorus contrast I find myself drawn to that song if I were to pick a favorite. Compare this album to other bands out there you ask? Forget it. If you can't somewhat picture what the music sounds like based on my description thus far then you just have to hear it for yourself! One thing I am trying to figure out is how Mr. Mosher was able to sink such money into this professional sounding/looking CD being that he's released this album himself. However the will and way came about, kudos to you Mr. Mosher! (8.25/10 stars)

### METALCORE FANZINE:

Cool metal band with a touch of Dream Theatre to it. Clean vocals rule when the music is played this way. Quality songs and production is sharp as well. Fans of Dream Theatre and fans of progressive rock would like this as I did.

### METAL JUDGEMENT:

Wow! This is a really excellent demo. I would call it Blade Runner meets Dream Theater. Scott Mosher calls it ambient, neo-progressive, cyber rock. Whatever you call it, it looks and sounds great. The artwork is all original work by Scott through his design studio, the Ambient Mind. All of the music is written and played by Scott with the exception of a few guest solos by friends. The CD is the embodiment of Scott Mosher's vision of music and art. I have to applaud Mosher's ability to capture all of his feelings,

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 15

thoughts and emotions in this one CD. The computer graphics have a really cool sci-fi feel. Pictures of smoke stacks, naked women and pyramids basque in an orange, star-laden sky. You could be on Mars or in NJ with during a sunset. Definitely take some time to check out his website. The site is well organized and has everything you would want on it (except porn).

The music is both ambient and progressive. At his most inspired, Mosher sounds like Dream Theater or Queensryche. Guitars and keyboards intertwine and produce power pop with musical integrity. However, to me, ambient means boring. I have to admit there are plenty of long sleepy passages on this CD which threatened to send me to a different kind of dream theater. The music is very accessible and has good pop rock sensibility for the most part, but his love for ambiance causes Mosher to let parts go on for too long without change. I suspect this is due to the fact that he did everything himself and programmed a lot of stuff on the sequencer. It is far too easy to repeat passages over and over when you program them into the computer. And it is far too easy to be complacent about editing to your music when you are the only one playing in the band.

The absolute worst part of this CD is the drum machine which clicks away without feeling or emotion. The digital perfection constantly exposes Mosher as a bedroom genius. The absence of any outside influence on Mosher is apparent. You are in his world. As far as demos go, he has done a great job. It seems that so much is invested in this CD in terms of money, artwork and time, so I am saddened by the fact that he didn't use a real drummer. I know some people like that mechanical feel and sound, but I am not one of those people. I like real people playing instruments. Definitely go to Mosher's website and check out his music. It's good, but, sadly, it's not metal enough (hence, a one skull deduction). However, he has really showcased his skills as a musician, programmer and graphic artist. (6/10)

### **METAL MANIACS (JULY 2002 Issue):**

This is definitely where the blackest of the black sheep comes out of the herd. VIRTUALITY, a composition of sorts by Scott Mosher, proves to be one of the most progressive, chill-out 'mellowmetal' records I've heard in a while. This record is such a mind-bending space excursion it's mind-boggling. This isn't exactly my main thing, but as far as technical, artistic, and textured abilities go, this guy's armed with those special space-age crayola's and paints some crazy pictures! The artwork alone is remarkably well-done, and the layout couldn't be more perfect for it's surreal abstraction of reality and twisted perceptions of sound and structure. It's one of those records where it's not just songs, they each have chapters, subtitles, layers and piles of technical jargon. Jesus! This is the kind of stuff that makes you visualize shit while you're just sitting there listening, or somehow, makes you feel something, even when it's just 'whatever the fuck is on in the background.' [I heard this disc and it made me think of The Jetsons. I think it had something to do with the futuristic industrial cover. 'The Jetsons build a power plant' - Liz].

I'm not a big fan of the vocals, but they grew on me. It's like the Geddy Lee complex, if you catch my whiff. There's actually a whole lot of 'Rush-ish' stuff happening here. This feels like what should be THE MATRIX soundtrack instead of all that techno be-bop shit. Mentally driving beats and layers wind their way through themselves like a tank of electric eels. Classic metal solos and programmed drums drive this like it could not only power the aforementioned modern techno-thriller but goddamn, Rocky could be jogging to this shit too! It's inspiring, mellow, and full of building energy. This is for fans of KING CRIMSON, DREAM THEATER, RUSH and the rest of all the bands I'm supposed to use to describe this record. Even some of the New-Age head music is here with all the keyboards and blended sounds. I'm by no means the best one to review this record, but it came to me, and it is some exceptional shit so I did my best. I'll accept any condemnation from all you apparent REAL critics, but I won't give a shit. I have the CD and you don't.

### **METAL OBSERVER ONLINE:**

Scott Mosher? With this name you would rather expect Thrash or Thrashcore or something of the likes, but nope. The self-given categorization of Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber-Rock sounds pretty bulky, but as strange as it may sound, you really can put it this way, because it basically features the different styles of this solo-project pretty accurately.

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 16

The opening intro-instrumental "Upon The Frontiers Of Infinite Night" I somehow feel reminded of Jean-Michel Jarre, very atmospheric keyboards, but not in the usual intro-style, rather like a song. After that an e-guitar joins in, supporting the keys. A mixture from Jarre-esque Ambient-atmo-sound and some guitars plus vocals, which sound a little fragile (the comparison with Geddy Lee in fact comes surprisingly close), but fits the music very well is what the title-track "Virtuality" is bringing us and even though the guitars never come to the foreground (apart from the solo), the song convinces fully by the atmosphere that it creates, strong one!

Also the rest of the album is borne by the combination of the spheric keyboards and electric guitars, sometimes instrumental, sometimes with vocals (where those of guest-singer Todd Corsa are much more to my liking than the at times included passages with Scott himself), but always atmospheric. As mentioned before, the best description might be Jean-Michel Jarre with mire guitars and drums and vocals. To find something better is damn hard... For bone-dry Metallers "Virtuality" is not suited, neither for purists, because especially the spheric keyboards are not everybody's cup of tea, but if you want to keep it calmer, then "Virtuality" is a very interesting and for sure strong album, because it invites you to dream and float away, but still with good solos and guitar-parts! Also more than remarkable is the brilliant artwork (in this case the whole booklet), which is top-notch, so the whole package is right!

### METAL RULES!

Wow. Probably the best packaging by an indie I have seen in ages. Extremely top notch, professional in all areas. Your eyes are greeted by a sea/space-scape with factory towers belching smoke into the red sky. Very cool. The cover encloses a 14 page, full colour booklet, with lyrics, liner notes, an essay, the artists bio, footnotes, all beautifully designed and integrated into a dozen or so computer generated images. Most of the images have a similar theme of the environment, the future, technology and so on. It reminds me a bit of something Gamma Ray would do but a darker and not as cartoonish. Very impressive. The packaging and lyrics leaves no doubt to Mr. Moshers political stance. For what it is worth, I disagree with many of his opinions and feel politics don't really have a place in music BUT having said that music especially rock 'n' roll has always been a place of political protest (and awareness) so it is interesting to see a whole CD with a strong theme, and one that the artist obviously feels very passionately about. Scott is the ultimate one-man and. He did it all, lyrics, composition, artwork, design, performing all instruments, and the man is an incredible talent no matter what I think of his politics! He has some help from Todd Corsa on vocals and in some places guitar as well.

VIRTUALITY is a twelve track, minute CD that is more of an ambient prog rock/metal musical soundscape rather than 12 individual songs with unique identity. It might have been just me but it seemed that parts, (just little parts) like a guitar riff or keyboard swirl would show up again and again adding to feel of continuity between songs. There are lots of keyboards and synthesized sounds on this disc, some in a very riff-oriented style but mostly an underlying swash of texture that might usually be provided by a rhythm guitar. The programmed drums are just there to do the job nothing more nothing less. It was very hard to categorize this CD and in fact Scott mentions that in his liner notes. Maybe that's why I liked it, it is atypical and therefore sounds quite refreshing and unique. However, when you try to embrace something so personal and intimate as this CD if you are not on board, it lacks the emotional connection. Therefore although dazzled by the brilliance of it all I was left a bit emotional unattached, feeling many of the songs were too similar. Of course, that is the entire point, the cohesion of his artistic vision of "spiritual energy and therein is the abstract concept of the ambient mind" is remarkable however, because I don't share that vision that's why it fell short of top marks. Regardless of your stance I strongly recommend you check this CD out, it could be one of the most interesting things you hear this year. (3.75/5)

### METAL UNION:

And so is uttered forth the most unusual thing this issue. A mixture of soundscapes, progressive metal, and futuristic world, this release is definitely one of most original pieces of work I've ever heard. Although not really my bag, I really appreciate this,



because when you turn it up, it's mesmerizing. The keyboards wash over everything, and the effected vocals are excellent. Granted, this is something I put on in a dark room or while going to sleep, but it's still great. There seems to be a bit of RUSH influence - everyone that's heard this that I've shown it to says that, at least. Maybe it's just the way things are arranged. Who knows? I can't say much more than what I've already said, though, because I'm just not familiar enough with this kind of progressive music to be truly informed of what's going on with this.

### MUSIC STREET JOURNAL:

Scott Mosher is an artist of considerable talent and ideals. The liner notes to his CD list a very extensive list of environmental, social and other idealistic charities that Mosher supports. Quite the renaissance man, Mosher is not only a musician, but also a graphic artist. Does that mean that his music suffers from lack of attention? Far from it, that form's representation on this CD has strong prog leanings with a great original and unique style. The material does harken back to other artists, most notably Rush and Hawkwind, but the tapestry that Mosher weaves really just shares a little with those sounds. Mosher also does the vast majority of the performances on this album, joined only in places by Todd Corsa and Mickey James. You will not hear another CD quite like this one, and I mean that in the best of ways. For info on getting the CD stop by Mosher's homepage at <http://www.theambientmind.com/virtuality>.

### Track by Track Review

**Upon The Frontiers of Infinite Night:** Beginning atmospheric, melody begins to unfold at first in a rather Michael Oldfield oriented way, then it turns heavy. As the intensity explodes it becomes somewhat metallic this is a fairly brief instrumental.

**Virtuality:** A keyboard fanfare starts the cut, but the bass line comes in in an almost '80's metal style. The vocals call to mind Geddy Lee just a little, but in a somewhat lower register. That brings a Rushish sort of feel to the piece. The instrumental break is both tasty and inspired, adding strong prog leanings back into the mix. Although the Rush influences are strong, the song is really unique.

**The Human Machine:** This one starts out slowly, gradually building on its simple basis by adding both instrumentation and complexity. The vocals on the verse are in the form of slowed-down spoken voice Ala Rush's Caress of Steel's narration. The Rush influences are definitely strong here, as well, but with some other unplaceable prog stylings finishing the picture. After a time a break ensues with a Celtic based percussion mode. This is a very cool song.

**A Season Of Fire:** Another instrumental, this one begins with a keyboard flourish and starts a building process from there. As the other instruments enter the, intensity soars as the jam continues. Rushish influences surface at many times but with a backdrop that feels more like ELP and even Tomita at times. As the second movement begins a Hawkwindesque drone takes the piece, the sheets of keys begin to encircle the listener. A very Rushish jam ensues from there, but the Hawkish tendencies remain. After a time a triumphant sounding prog jam replaces all that. This is a great track with plenty of changes.

**Attilou Sunrise:** Sedate keyboard tones begin this one. Another instrumental, it is a delicate and gentle piece that works and wanders very carefully around its beginning style. The only complaint is that this piece is a little long.

**Re-Define:** More rock just a bit in the mode of '80's metal bands like Europe starts this cut. The Rushisms only show up on the vocals of this one. As the cut carries on it changes, though and there are some considerably meaty segments.

**The Dreaming Eye:** Beginning as a fairly sedate electronically based jam, the power quickly jumps and more of the processed spoken vocals come in. The jam gets quite interesting and energized as it carries on. Particularly intriguing is the shift into the second major movement when the cut is washed over by a sedate, calming keyboard segment that borders on fusion. Then it starts jumping in bursts from there before screaming out full on. This one just keeps evolving and is one of the strongest pieces on the CD. It is one that shows a definite sense of unique identity.

**Sometime After Midnight:** Coming in with a slightly off-kilter rhythmic structure, this instrumental follows patterns of sound in an organic, but somewhat quirky jam. It shows the disc just getting better as this piece is even stronger than the jam that came before. It drops to a slower segment and follows that through to almost a full stop. A very gradual buildup ensues as the song begins to rise from the ashes. That guitar work on this one at times seems to take on a slight Howieish texture. Eventually a rapid-fire, overdrive speed jam take the piece into new territory.

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 18

**The Promise of Truth:** Starting off with a prog style that is at once a bit mysterious while still triumphant. This one really makes a strong entrance. It drops to just keys, then begins a more pop-oriented prog song structure to continue - think Asia. This piece is not as strong as some of the other material here.

**Shores of A Cosmic Ocean:** This instrumental, as the title suggests, begins with atmospheric keys slowly coming in, as if washing on a shore. They build, then eventually move back out much as they entered.

**Infinity Burns:** Keys also starts this instrumental, and as the guitar enters it adds a lot of dramatic flair to the piece. It builds in a strong, somewhat hard-edged prog mode, but never wanders too far from its main theme.

**Sorrow In A World Of Darkness:** Beginning much like Hawkwind, a metallic sort of transformation takes the track. The vocals bring back the Rushish leanings. After a time the composition moves into the next movement, one of only keys in an intricate sort of mode at times, almost feeling like butterflies flitting about. This feeling does not last long, however, as a hard-edged, almost Pink Floyd oriented sound comes in, punctuated by neo-classical frantic jamming. This eventually resolves down into something a bit more settling again. Then it just builds on pre-existing themes for a time. Eventually, a percussive buildup takes the cut again and the Rush leanings return once again. Another change pulls it into a more fusion based variant on that section to continue. It drops down to atmospheric keys in a segment that calls to mind the melodic sedate side of Hawkwind to take both the track and album to its conclusion.

### MUZIKMAN REVIEW:

Scott Mosher is a new world artist. He is a multi-faceted talent that not only creates visionary musical journeys; he is a graphic artist, website designer, multi-talented musician, and above all soul on earth with a purpose. He goes far beyond his music in his music. He has a vision, a voice to be heard and strong opinions and beliefs that are projected through his potent musical translations.

You will discover Mosher's picturesque worlds through the graphics, words, and commentary in the CD booklet of "Virtuality." All of those aspects of his work are pushed through a portal in time created in each song of ambient progressive guitar oriented music. Most of the music is instrumental. When vocals are used they are appropriately placed between the notes to emphasize the meaning of the story. His guest bass player Todd "shreedy gee" Corsa serves up vocals that all "Rush" fans will recognize. Notice the play on words for his nickname, Geddy Lee is the obvious intimation here. He effectively uses layers of atmospheric keyboards, perfectly placed sequencing of percussion, and rousing guitar parts to blast you off in your own personal starship to a musical void just waiting for you to inhabit.

His website is a tribute to all of his talents, so make sure you check it out. I expect a lot more from Mosher's corner of the world in the years to come. There aren't that many people out there with a multitude of talents that have the ability to harness and control it all properly to make a convincing presentation like this. This CD is just the tip of the iceberg for this man. I really enjoyed every moment that this music had to offer. To fully experience this you must put on the CD, read the liner notes, look at the images, and browse his website. Scott Mosher is the epitome of the new world man (thanks again Rush), he is a 21st century Leonardo Da Vinci just waiting to be discovered. This CD is a fine place to start the trip that I am sure you will all love to go on. - Rating- 3.5/4

### OGAM MAGAZINE:

I couldn't even finish listening to one entire track from this solo artist and it's not that he's not good at what he does. As a matter of fact, he knows his electronic toys rather well, I just think this kind of stuff is better suited for movies and sci-fi tv shows. This atmospheric rock is just not my kind of music, but Scott is very multi-talented, he also is good at producing an excellent product!

### OPEN UP AND SAY AH REVIEW:

The words I write will hardly do Scott Mosher's "Virtuality" album justice. Not that it's the greatest, most superb piece of material to ever hit the music scene, but more so because of the time, energy, thought, and absolute dedication that is evidently

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 19

forged into this project. The liner-notes themselves are a piece of work within itself. Scott not only composed and performed everything on this album (minus lead vocals, one guitar solo, and one bass solo), but he also created all of the artwork for the CD. Multi-talented indeed.

Combining art and music to bring forth his beliefs, opinions, and general outlook on life itself, Scott serves up over seventy minutes of music to the masses. The tongue-in-cheek genre description on the back of the CD, quite frankly, describes this album to a tee. It reads, "File under: Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber Rock." How's that for a description- I would even say throw some trance and electronica elements into the mix as well.

The album is about half instrumental and, at times, reminds me of those videos you can buy in the store. You know, the ones where there are different 3-D animations and sequences on the screen with the cool, relaxing ambient music in the background. Soothing. For the songs that have vocals, I liken them a lot to the band Rush. That is mainly due to the fact that vocalist Todd Corso has a heavy Geddy Lee influence, my opinion anyway. Scott even throws some heavily effect-laden vocals into the song "The Human: Machine" With its unique verse/chorus contrast, I find myself drawn to this song, if I were to pick a favorite. Compare this album to other bands out there, you ask- Forget it. If you cannot somewhat picture what the music sounds like based on my description thus far, then you just have to hear it for yourself. One thing I am trying to figure out is how Mr. Mosher was able to sink such money into this professional sounding and looking CD, being that he has released this album himself. However the will and way came about, kudos to you Mr. Mosher!

### OPUS 1 ZINE:

I've been writing about music for several years now, and over time, I've learned a few things. First, turntables and rock don't mix. Second, if you're pissed off, make sure you have a good reason before you record it for the rest of us. Third, If you think your music is clever (or cutting edge), it's not. And I'm about to add another one to that list. For God's sake, don't ever make up a genre for your music. That kind of privilege is reserved for a very select few. But they're usually too busy defying genres to define them.

I hate to judge albums by their cover, but I found it much harder to take *Virtuality* seriously after reading Mosher's comments on the back: "File under Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber-Rock." Here's the real litmus test; when you read that, did you have to suppress a shudder? If so, than you're not going to like this album. To Mosher's credit, that string of hyphens comes pretty close to summing up *Virtuality's* sound. Its dreamy, starlit synthwork sure is ambient (my co-worker even thought it was Yannii at first). And I guess it's progressive, what with the grandiose flourishes and highbrow concepts. And there's plenty of rock, with loads of thrashing guitar leads that probably owe more to Satriani and Vai than anyone will ever know.

You can't deny that Mosher is a technically-skilled musician, and that *Virtuality* is a topnotch recording. The production is excellent, the arrangements are tight, and I'm sure the recording studio was state of the art. But you know what? All technical merit aside, I never once felt any emotional response to the music. In fact, I found it pretty emotionless. Mosher's guitar-playing may be rich in tone and his leads may be scorching, but nothing ever gave me goosebumps, caused my jaw to drop, or made me want to put the rest of life on hold so that I could listen a little closer.

Lyricaly, it's the same. *Virtuality* may be a "progressive perspective on socio-political and environmental issues," but I'm hardpressed to see that in the cryptic lyrics, which read more like the edited portions of a William Gibson novel than any serious look at corporate corruption, political tyranny, and the environment. "The Human Machine" might be about how human life is increasingly becoming a commodity in our world. However, "The essence of lost humanity/Confined behind more steel circuitry/Lost in a fiber-optic mirror/As the cyborg armies that draw nearer" just sounds like a bunch of *\_Blade Runner\_*-isms strung together. "The Dreaming Eye" sure strives to be the album's transcendental moment, with references to swimming "in the

omnipotence of time,” floating “in a dreamspace ocean,” and whatnot. But if I wanted such obtuseness, I’d turn to “Dianetics.” If I’m supposed to take *Virtuality* seriously, I don’t need be told it’s trying to “forge a dramatic and atmospheric listening experience without genre-specific constraints while attaining a dynamic rarely heard in today’s corporate musical climate.”

I don’t need a senior thesis on Mosher’s musical vision, including his “experimental proto-electronic trance-rock rap-funk-metal” projects. I don’t need a documentary on the concept behind the cover art. And I don’t need to read Mosher’s personal philosophy on everything, regardless of how much he feels it’s necessary so that I can understand his “art” in the proper “context.” I like to know about an artist’s philosophy as much as the next music lover. Such knowledge does provide valuable insight into their work. But when it requires a tome to explain it, I think you’ve gone too far. To be honest, it feels insulting, as if the album’s concept is so far beyond the grasp of mere mortals like myself that I need a user’s manual (complete with smarmy, self-deprecating humor). I don’t need or want everything to be spelled out so that I can enjoy an album. *Virtuality* is as heavy-handed as it is Byzantine, and never becomes as compelling as it tries so hard to be, regardless of what you file it under.

### OPEN EARS:

Art - Music - Life. That’s Scott Mosher’s mantra in short form. The extended version reads: “...merging the worlds of progressive metal, ambient, new-age and cinematic rock in a contemporary fusion of techno/trance-inspired song structures. The thematic soundscapes of *Virtuality* forge a dramatic and atmospheric listening experience without genre-specific constraints while attaining a dynamic rarely heard in today’s corporate musical climate, running the gamut from dreamy and introspective musical interludes, through haunting and ominous sound paintings into the realm of an intense rhythmic listening experience. I’d say he’s accomplished what he set out to do. It’s true he wears his influences on his sleeve, touting an updated RUSH sound, complete with vocalist Todd Corso as an uncanny Geddy Lee soundalike and an abundance of philosophical sci-fi lyrics. Then there are the ambient passages, pulsing rhythms with shifting chord washes floating atop. It’s all very listenable, and surprisingly well-arranged and produced. There is a nice balance between the myriad styles and influences. Further, there are moments which reach out and grab the listener, demanding attention. My favorite moments are the ambient instrumental “Atillon Sunrise” (a thing of beauty), and the anthemic “Re-Define.” If this album had been produced in the late 70s it would have been snatched up by a major label and hyped heavily. It probably would have sold over 100,000 copies. But in the modern day, such creative efforts are usually the result of the independent artist. With luck, they reach the ears of some who wish to hear. Do yourself a favor and snag a copy of this CD from Scott Mosher’s “Ambient Mind” website.

### PROGRESSIVE NEWSLETTER (2001)

This is proof that it does not always have to be solely dragons and gnomes when it comes to optically pleasing (appealing) packaging for Progressive Rock. Almost single-handed, from music to the graphics, Scott Mosher takes in his album *Virtuality* a different, more modern approach. This very appealing, exceedingly tasteful booklet shows a fantasy-world of the future. These ideas are mirrored in the texts as well as in the music. He combines Techno-Trance, Ambient, New Age and Cinematic Rock into a contemporary fusion of neo-progressive structures.

But fear not, words (text) as well as Techno or New Age here do not equate with bass-whump (boom, thrum) devoid of content, nor do they have to signify an empty void; it is more the round, space-like keyboard sounds which are aligned with these musical ranges (areas). Even though Scott Mosher is responsible for guitar, bass, keyboards, programming, percussion and voice, in no way does his album sound like a typical solo album. This is because on one hand his Neo-Progressive variant simply does not offer clichés only, but rather sounds quite modern, and on the other, he offers quite a broad palette of driving, dark exit numbers to the point of melodic bombast. Then the keyboards foremost serve as a foundation and provide with this wide screen sound for the actual sounds above which, now and then, the guitar climbs up in spirals.

Also, the artist does not commit the sin of wanting to do everything on his own; Todd Corso with his decent (respectable) voice was invited to come aboard. Nonetheless, in spite of its well thought-through concept and ensuing transposition the album



is occasionally lacking in the variation of songs. On numerous occasions some ideas are simply repeated too often without contributing to the effect of raising the tension in the song development. Apart from this, Scott Mosher is on the right path and delivers a modern (progressive), pressing and rocking Neo -Progressive variant that does not shy away from topical currents.

### **PILGRIM WORLD/TETSU HAMAKANA:**

Scott Mosher's latest album, *Virtuality*, is one of interesting music offerings I had missed last year. But finally I grabbed this on my hands. Musically, Scott Mosher himself describes what he has created on his latest album really well, such as the phrase of "Cyber Rock, Neo-Progressive Ambient" like that. Honestly, I really agree with his description about the music on *Virtuality*. On the album of *Virtuality*, you will find spacey sounds and massive futuristic synth sounds, which might have been created by KORG and up-to-date digital synthesizers and keyboards with heavy guitar sounds and helps of his skillful guest musicians. At glance, some tunes on this album appeals to the fans of AYREON and 80s era of RUSH.

However, the way Scott Mosher created on *Virtuality* has original touch, so that you can totally enjoy this album as a different entity. Personally, quite enjoyable neo-prog cyber rock sounds are different from other neo-prog and prog metal contemporaries. It is noticeable that sound production is pretty good, even though it seems to be independent release. I assume that Scott Mosher took many times to make polished and stellar sound as possible as he could. If you are the listener who is not able to accept other synthetic and ambient atmospheres in prog rock and prog metal style music, you might have probably difficult time to enjoy this one. However, I really recommend this album for prog metal and neo-prog fans who are open-minded to different elements intertwined within the context of music. Nice and fresh atmospheric sounds and heavy rocking guitars floating endlessly. More than half on this album contains spacey instrumentals, but each tune has explained with Scott Mosher's ethics, social issues, environmental topics, and philosophical themes on the booklet, so read carefully and enjoy the world of *Virtuality*. On the other hand, some tunes featuring lead vocalist and instrumentalists give the vibes of RUSH with his interpretation to listeners. Lastly, and not least, I am totally impressed with that he doesn't only create music by himself, but also does illustrates and creates the booklet and arts (pay attention to his nice workouts!!).

From the beginning to the end on the album, there is no filler and boring moments in my opinion. Totally unexpected nice work from independent release by the man himself, Scott Mosher. If you do not mind the sounds of cyber-edge, synthetic atmospheres, ambient feeling, and occasional trance states in heavy rock field, then I totally recommend each of you to check out his music. You will not get disappointed with his efforts. Well done job and highly recommended. (4.5/5)

### **POP CULTURE PRESS:**

Scott Mosher is a one-man musical universe unto himself, and he's indeed ambitious. With the exception of appearances by guest vocalist Todd Corsa and bassist Mickey James, he not only provides all instrumentation and programming on *Virtuality*, but also optic dreamscapes (read: artwork) and a distinct moral vision of the future of humankind. Billing his sound as "ambient neo-progressive cyber rock," it is immediately apparent that Mosher has put an incredible amount of thought and energy into realizing his new-age cosmic vision of the "ambient mind." He embraces admirable political convictions as well, penning charged prog-rock anthems against "corporate idiocracy" fueled by issues like civil rights, education, campaign finance reform, and our respective roles in determining the ultimate fate of Mother Earth. Still, there are problems aplenty with *Virtuality*. First, although drenching everything in gobs of reverb during the production process might make things sound as huge and limitless as space itself, it should not be mistaken for ambiance--these songs are both as subtle and nuanced as a jackhammer to the skull. The progressive influences are there in blatantly derivative Rush-meets-Dream Theater fashion (hey, you don't gotta be no genius; it's right in the liner notes---vocalist Corsa's nickname is "Shreddy Gee"). And while Mosher's guitar hero histrionics might well be approaching the speed of sound (fully half the record is instrumental), he milks them to mind-numbing repetition, with the 12 tracks on *Virtuality* clocking in at a whopping 72+ minutes. Herein lies the biggest problem--despite Mosher's obvious talent, conviction, and penchant for intricacy, these songs fail to allude even once to issues of the human heart.

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 22

Ultimately, he has succeeded in creating an ultra-science fiction utopia that looks as drearily banal as Huxley's Brave New World cross-bred with L. Ron Hubbard's Battlefield Earth.

### POWER PACKER:

Okey, let me first give you a run down on what happened as a place this CD into my CD player. I had the volume turned up quite a bit. First my mom who is a jazz enthusiast, asked who this was and stated that she liked it. Secondly, my brother, who is a house music enthusiast, also asked the same question and also stated that he liked this, somewhat. Then there's me, who has an open mind, but likes metal much more than any other type of music. I like this also. Are you getting the hidden message? This is a CD that people, who like and listen to all types of music, will enjoy. I would not call this metal - more atmospheric than rock. And since I enjoy atmospheric music, I can safely say that this is a great CD. At times, Scott Mosher and his music remind me of Alan Parsons Project, a band that had no musical boundaries and used synthesizers/keyboards a lot within their music. If you are into one type of music, and only like that one type of music, you may want to pass this one up, but if you have an open-mind musically, this should not be passed-up, especially if you are a fan of APP. (Fav. tracks: Virtuality, Re-Define). (Note: 'Virtuality' made the top 10 Spin-Tinglers list that issue, and VIRTUALITY the CD made the #13 in the top 40 list of the issue).

### POWERPLAY MAGAZINE:

With a surname like Mosher, you could be forgiven for jumping to the obvious conclusion. Coming at us from the beautiful city of Raleigh, North Carolina, Mosher delivers an album primarily filled with weird keyboard-driven tracks, infrequently sprinkled with the odd widdly guitar solo here or there. Mosher is also a man with very strong beliefs and opinions, which he shares within the impressive CD booklet. Whether you agree with what this guy stands for or not, you've gotta take your hat off to him for standing up and trying to make a difference. On the musical side, well, that's where it all goes wrong! make no mistake, Scott is obviously one talented guitarist, but this collection of abstract tunes, which he advises to file under 'ambient, neo-progressive cyber-rock' is exactly that - tunes. They go nowhere, have no hooks and pass you by like a stranger in the night. There's no doubt in my mind that Scott Mosher is not looking to set the heather on fire and climb to the forefront of MTV, but if he carries on in this vein, he only one interested in what he's producing will be himself. - Sound: 4/10, Song-writing: 1/10, Genre: 1/10

### PROG4U.COM:

It's uncommon in today's musical environment that you find a project, which an artist can truly call his own creation. Scott Mosher can, and delivers a CD that is very ambitious in its scope and statement about the human condition today; also the outlook on the not so distant future. Scott wrote, played, and produced the music and graphics that make up the CD and its accompanying booklet. The music, which is described as neo-progressive, is actually much more new age, techno-trance and some fusion all thrown in the mix. This creates music that is quite incredible at times with its atmospheric keyboards and soaring guitar. Scott wrote all the music and lyrics and plays all the instruments and performs vocals with a small assist from Todd Corsa on some of the songs. I know most prog fans will find this CD very enjoyable with its mix of songs and moods that Mr. Mosher has created. I would recommend it highly to all to check out. It's a very fine recording with great production values and just looking at the detailed artwork is worth the price of the disc. This is a thought provoking and well-done CD.

### PROGNOSIS:

Recording Info: Virtuality is Scott Mosher's 3rd recording. It is entirely composed by Mosher who also did the art work. It is self-produced and with the exception of vocals and a single guitar and bass solo is performed entirely by him. The 16 page booklet contains art work, lyrics, and tidbits of the artists personal ideology and philosophy.

Music is one of 3 elements of Mosher's product - the others being art and his personal philosophy on life. The album cover and booklet reflect highly on Mosher's skills as a graphic artist. The CD is accompanied by a 16-page full-color insert with lyrics, art & philosophical musings. It is rare to find a self-produced/self-financed album with such first class materials. At times sounding

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 23

a bit like Rush and at other times making me think of Billy Thorp (Children of the Sun era), Virtuality also occasionally calls to mind Tangerine Dream and Ozric Tentacles. Mosher is obviously a talented musician who is responsible for everything you hear except vocals (Todd Corsa handles this sounding a bit like Geddy Lee) and a guitar and bass solo. His studio work (production & mixing) is top notch - this is an excellent sounding recording. Although there are discrete songs, the best way to listen to this recording is in its' entirety and I might add that the CD sounds best loud. It also plays very nicely in headphones.

Mosher calls this music 'ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock'. It is hardly an ambient recording and I would describe it more along the lines neo-prog/metal (but what's in a name anyway?). There are techno/trance elements to be sure, but the power of the rock elements ensure Virtuality is never boring or repetitious. The guitar work is excellent, the vocals and melodies are good, and - unusual for this kind of work, the drums are fine (not to be mistaken for Neil Pert however). I like Virtuality. Neo-prog fans (who aren't bothered by the word 'metal') and prog-metal fans (who aren't bothered by the word 'neo') will like it too. You can order this CD through Scott Mosher's web site for the more than reasonable price of \$11.00 US.

### PROGPOWER ONLINE:

It rarely happens that we get such ambitious projects as this CD is. I tell you, Scott Mosher, the mastermind behind this CD, is one impressive and productive man. He has made the booklet/graphics, done the programming, sequencing, produced and played every instrument on this CD, except for a couple of solos and the lead vocals. The booklet is filled with beautiful graphics and a comprehensive, insightful liner note on the present world situation and personal beliefs. All this, completed with the music takes you on a journey of atmospheric soundscapes and into another state of mind.

In the booklet the music is described as "Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber-Rock." This description makes a lot more sense after hearing the actual music but I will try to break it down for you. Roughly speaking - take one portion prog rock (or neo-prog if you want), add one touch of prog metal-light, a few ambient elements and we have the basics. On top, we have very present atmospheric keyboards with soft, clean mid-ranged vocals. If we talk band comparisons, there really aren't any, as Virtuality has its very own distinctive sound. Although, I can hear small elements of Ayreon, Mystery (the French band), Rush and Arena. 8 of the 12 songs are instrumentals.

Although I find the songs with vocals to be stronger, some of the instrumentals are equally good as well. The melodies are very melodic and the atmospheric elements make them comfortable to listen to. In the end I feel that the CD would have profited by replacing a couple of instrumentals with vocal tracks. The production is clean and each instrument is very present in the mix. I am extremely impressed just thinking of all the time, energy, thought and creativity put into this product but at the same time I am relieved that it has paid off. Virtuality has become a completely professional product and has more to offer than just the music. As for the music itself, I am sure prog fans will find plenty to enjoy here. Absolutely worth checking out! (9/12 points)

### PROG PT:

Do you know what "Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber Rock" is? Well, I think it's time for you to find out. I have no intention to explain what it is but I'll do my best to give you a musical image of this work. Scott Mosher is a north-american musician and also a graphic artist. This is his second solo release and I don't think it will be the last. He is talented enough to offer us lots of good works.

This CD is wrapped in a "Blade Runner" atmosphere as the artwork is very inspired on the ambient set on that film. Musically speaking, this work offers a wide range of futuristic soundscapes mixed with free progressive structures. While keyboard textures prevail, the guitar work adds lots of strength and power to the music. The reverb effect gives another dimension to the music too but I think it is over-used since it throws the guitar sound too much to the background. Let's start with the simple tracks. VIRTUALITY, RE-DEFINE and THE PROMISE OF TRUTH can be considered "normal" tracks since they obey to a normal song structure. The

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 24

addition of vocals here brings these tracks down to Earth and doesn't let them fly through sidereal space. A SEASON OF FIRE, as well as SORROW IN A WORLD OF DARKNESS, are tracks that wander over an hi-tech and dark world. It's hard to talk about rhythms, time signatures or types of composition since the music here acts just like an epic flow. It surrounds us and if we close our eyes we're taken into a virtual world. But the highlight of the album comes with THE DREAMING EYE and SOMETIME AFTER MIDNIGHT. The guitar draws a magnificent melodic contour and touches the limit of the Universe! Glorious! This is, in fact, a good album and I just want to point out a single fault: the rather bad drum programming. For those of you who are also into new-age music and who like futuristic themes, well, run for it! A final word for the brilliant CD cover and booklet artwork!

### PROGRESSION MAGAZINE: (6/2002)

(Sound: 3/4, Composition: 2/4, Musicianship: 3/4, Performance: 3/4, Total Rating: 11/16)

While Scott Mosher's programming and sequencing show obvious technical gifts, VIRTUALITY is much more interesting when he goes for the ambient division of the (self-styled) stylistic tryptych noted above, and leaves the pounding drum parts out of the mix. "Upon the Frontiers of Infinite Night" draws the listener into a spacey, yet gritty landscape, kicking into a storming barrage of looped sounds, and slightly off-kilter rhythm. It's this barrage that ultimately makes the disc more agitating, than pleasure-rpovoking. The title track further tightens the rock feel, introducing Todd Corsa's Geddy-Lee-ish vocals, while the 7-minute "Season of Fire" pushes the Rush comparison further (the lyrical references to various -ologies on 'Re-Define' are also very Rush)... "Infinity Burns" has a wonderfully delicate sequencer riff, but it's quickly enveloped by the overwhelming pomp and lack of circumstance. "Atillion Sunrise" is a sweet, almost hymnal, keyboard-dominated piece; like "Shores of a Cosmic Ocean", it's a welcome relief from the surrounding bustle. There are a number of good ideas here, but the execution sometimes misfires. - Larry Nai

### PROGRESSIVE EARS:

Hi Scott! Your CD is totally awesome! Three thumbs up!!! Virtuality is one of the coolest albums of the year. Although this might not appeal to everyone, I think many fans of prog metal will really dig it. It's more electronic and not always heavy but it does have a good deal of crunchy guitars. Excellent work! Playing all the instruments, writing all the songs, creating those killer graphics in the booklet took a great deal of hard work and I know it will pay off. I really enjoyed reading the liner notes as much as listening to the music, too. Dude, you're just a downright positive guy doing some totally killer music. And that singer, Todd Corsa ... very cool, very Geddy Leeish. Rush fans should take note of him. The vocal effects throughout the album are very original and well planned. I especially like the ultra-deep voice on "Architects Of The Divine." I'd have to say I probably like this more than anything Rush has done in the past 20 years. My favorite on the album so far is "The Human Machine." I really like the man vs. computer concept. It's very similar to ELP's "Karn Evil 9" updated for our times. Actually the entire album is very modernly futuristic as a complete package. I'd heartily recommend it to fans of Dream Theater, newer Rush, Ayreon, Spock's Beard, Marillion and even Tangerine Dream fans would enjoy the extensive use of the synths and sequencers. I look forward to hearing more of your music. This has been one of the best and most professional CDs that I've heard all year. It's really hard to believe that you created almost all of it by yourself. Keep up the excellent work! Sincerely, Floyd - P.S. Now that I've written the review, do I get a case of Dr. Pepper?

### PROGRESSIVE ELECTRONIC WEBSITE:

Scott Mosher's second official release represents a definite progression from the fine Ambient earth of some five years previously. The brief opening Upon the frontiers of infinite night immediately places us in a much harder, more rock orientated environment than the Tangerine Dream like electronics of the debut might have led us to expect. The second track though is even more surprising, as it features the first vocals to appear on a Mosher track. Tom Corso, who sings on about half the songs here, adds some decent vocals to this the title track. The track is awash with synth rhythms and pulsating guitar belying the progressive electronic tag he appears under here. The song is on one level simplistic and pop, while simultaneously offering a mix of prog metal and electronic trance. The drums here sound genuine, but as no specific credit is given it would seem they are programmed. Elsewhere on the album, it is more apparent that the drumming is electronic.



Human: machine has strong similarities with Arjen Lucassen's Star one project, the heavy keyboard driven rhythm also being reminiscent of Porcupine Tree's more recent albums. Likewise, the following instrumental A season of fire rattles along in a cacophony of sound. It is only when we reach the fifth track, Atillon sunrise, that the album pauses for breath. This gentle, reflective synth piece has much more in keeping with the ambient new age sounds of Tangerine Dream and Rick Wakeman.

Re-define finds Corso sounding more than ever like Geddy Lee of Rush, the lyrics also being suitably mystical and Rush like. At times though, the rhyming pattern can be a little stretched and ordinary (humanity/duality/reality/ideology/symmetry).

The dreaming eye returns us to the style of Human: machine with distorted spoken vocals and upbeat synth bursts. Most of the tracks here run to around six or seven minutes, offering plenty of space to develop them to the full. Sometime after midnight utilises that room through a fine blend of synth and guitar, the mood fluctuating between quick loud bursts and atmospheric waves.

The promise of truth is the most ordinary track here. It has the power of its peers instrumentally, but it feels like it is a pretty conventional AOR rock song, devoid of character. Shores of a cosmic ocean is an onomatopoeic title for a drift into new age waves of sound, while Infinity burns is a shorter loud repetitive dirge which leans towards post rock.

The album closes with the longest track Mosher has recorded up to this point, the 10 minute Sorrow in a world of darkness. The slower pace brings out the melody of the vocals well here, the track bringing together the constituent parts of the album in a fine final flourish. Once again, my only minor grumble is the repeated use of fade (which even appears during the track here). This track cries out for a monumental and climactic finish, not the disappointing soft wind down it features.

This is another fine album by Scott Mosher, which sees him making a great effort explore new areas and not simply to rest on his laurels. Do not be put off or unduly influenced by the Progressive electronic sub-genre which accompanies this album, this will appeal to a wide range of prog fans, and especially to those who enjoy prog metal with plenty of keyboards. In all, it represents a major leap forward by Mosher, whose talent both in terms of composition and performance warrant much greater recognition than he has received to date.

### **PROGRESSIVE WORLD (10/2001):**

Scott Mosher's *Virtuality* is a much deeper work than any review can adequately express, even by me, being one is prone to lengthy, verbose, and often tangential reviews. As much as this album is about the music, it is about the message. And it is those messages and meaning of the lyrics that one, I, could get lost in. Mosher defines "virtuality" as "the convergence of sight, sound and progressive perspective on socio-political and environmental issues." Mosher shares some of his perspectives both in the liner notes and the lyrics (you'll also find a list of links to worthy organizations). From that, you can gather that we don't have here 12 songs rather lightweight topics, but rather ruminations on the world around us and within us. Mosher's view is pessimistic, but it is a future that seems all very plausible. The cover depicts a smoke-choked sky with factories only adding to the haze. I need only look out at Los Angeles on any morning as see just such a sight. On a clear day, you can see the LA high-rises...but clear days are rare, and more often than not, you see this brown blanket obscuring the horizon. Mosher is based on the other side of the US, in North Carolina, but I am certain that this toxic air exists even there. And I hear in my mind's ear a line from "Synchronicity II" by the Police...which doesn't relate otherwise except for the "belching filth into the sky" phrase. Which indicates that Mosher isn't the only introspective extroverted artist out there. This he shares with another hard rocking, thinking-person's band, namely Rush.

Mosher bills his music as “ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock.” Now, don’t go expecting a whole lot of what is commonly referred to as neo-prog, as I hear not a wit of any known neo-prog band, even I “stop calling us neo” Q. No, Mosher is solidly in the hard rock genre - well, cyber-rock. Futuristic themes where technology has a greater hold on our lives. It’s that same dystopia I’ve found in Brainstorm’s Tales Of The Future and Reindel’s Mind Probe and Mere Mortal, though these artists are by no means unique in that vision. That leaves “ambient” left to mention... well, this isn’t “ambient” in the sense that Eno might use, as the music isn’t as subtle as, say, Music For Airports (to namecheck a well-known Eno work). Instead, Mosher’s ambient is more like synth-based space rock (is there any other kind? I ask, rhetorically)... but don’t then think of classic Tangerine Dream... Kevin Braheny is the artist that immediately came to mind. Oh, and there are two tracks that fit into this “ambient” category and that is “Attillon Sunrise,” which is a slowly undulating piece of music, and “Shores Of A Cosmic Ocean,” which, like Steve Roach, is able to achieve that feeling of static motion. The “cyber-rock” tag is the most common aspect here, and most apparent on “The Human: Machine,” but, of course, elsewhere.

So I mentioned Rush as a comparison, but in the case of “The Promise Of Truth” one might think of 80s Journey, circa Frontiers, and specifically “Rubicon,” and, perhaps, the title track. If you are one of those who don’t care much for the lyrics, there is still plenty for you. Great guitar leads, playing and use of keyboards, etc. -- all Mosher, by the way, though Tom Corso does the singing throughout and plays a guitar solo on “Architects Of The Divine.” Mickey “Bass Dawg” James plays a bass solo on “The Promise Of Truth.” Usually one points out the highlights of an album...and maybe by default I have, but any one the tracks would qualify, as each are really worth mentioning. But, as I said at the outset, encompassing this album in anything but broad terms would need a review 10 times this size.

Mosher isn’t shy about encouraging folks to listen to his music, as anyone who spends any time at E-prog or rec.music.progressive knows. But, unlike the hard, and often hyperbolic, sell we are inundated with from media outlets and labels that seemingly have money to burn, Mosher can back it up with a very solid release. I can tell you that even though I have put these thoughts down on...well, into bytes and set them loose in the digital world, I’m not really finished listening to this disk yet. I am fascinated by it...I find I want to spend more time with it. And I’m not saying this for any other reason than that this is what I feel. I liken this to my reaction to Pain Of Salvation. You can listen and listen to album over and over again, and get a feel for the music, but one really needs to sit in a place with no distractions and just absorb the album, as there is so much going on -- so much background to it. Preferably, one should do this for a week’s time. And by the way, this is the kind of music I like... So, in case it wasn’t obvious, this album comes highly recommended.

### PROGRESSOR ONLINE:

Prologue: VIRTUALITY is the debut album by Scott Mosher. The numbers of Solo Pilots have grown again and the fresh forces regularly arrive on a scene. The Album: On the whole, Scott Mosher’s VIRTUALITY is a rather original album. He himself defines his music as Neo Progressive Ambient Trance Cyber Rock. Certainly, Scott never did hear the US band Braindance, who are the pioneers of the style of Progressive Dark Wave.

For the most part however, the music that is featured on VIRTUALITY reminds me of a pared down (i.e. Neo) version of Progressive Dark Wave more than anything else. The decent tracks on the album are those that feature the parts of real instruments, apart from the programmed bass and drums, and various sequenced solos. These are: Virtuality, The Human Machine, A Season of Fire, Re-Define, The Dreaming Eye, Sometime After Midnight, The Promise of Truth, and Sorrow In a World of Darkness (tracks 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 12). And all of them consist of structures that, in my view, fit the style of Neo Progressive Dark Wave even despite the fact that the basis of these structures is completely ‘synthetic’. The majority of solos and passages of keyboards represent cycled sequences, which often makes them too monotonous. A few of the real keyboard passages are featured only on Sometime After Midnight and Sorrow In a World of Darkness. A real bass solo is heard only in the end of The Promise of Truth. The vocals are present on Virtuality, The Human Machine, Re-Define, The Dreaming Eye, The Promise of Truth, and Sorrow In a

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 27

World of Darkness. All eight of the said compositions contain heavy guitar riffs. However, most of them aren't as expressive as the guitar solos. The latter are also featured on all of these eight compositions, and the majority of them are tasteful and virtuosi. So thanks only to them, two thirds of the contents of this album are more or less listenable from a progressive standpoint. As for the four of the remaining tracks, namely Upon the Frontiers of Infinite Night, Attilon Sunrise, Shores of a Cosmic Ocean, and Infinity Burns (tracks 5 & 10), they aren't progressive at all. While two of them: Attilon Sunrise and Shores of a Cosmic Ocean, entirely consisting of the 'ambient' sequences, represent just a dead music.

Summary: As I have previously said, Scott Mosher's music is on the whole original. So I can consider him a pioneer of Neo Progressive Dark Wave. However, unlike the Classic 'example' of this style, the music of VIRTUALITY has little to do with real Progressive Rock. On the other hand, it has a huge commercial potential, but that is another story.

### PROG REVIEWS:

"Virtuality" is multi-instrumentalist Scott Mosher's third album. The album is self-financed and Scott has even done the beautiful Blade Runner- influenced artwork himself. Scott is a very talented musician and he calls his own compositions "ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock". I don't really know about that. The music is doubtlessly ambient, but it also has reminiscences to Dream Theater, Journey, Queensryche and most of all Rush. The overall impression is very complex and positive, but unfortunately there are too many electronic drums and sequenced synthesizers, and that's the main reason why this album doesn't get a top rating. I even considered giving it an even lower rating, but the musicianship is too good for that. - Reviewer: Greger Rönqvist (greger.ronqvist@infodata.sema.se; 7/10)

### PROG VISIONS:

The best way to describe Scott Mosher's music is a cross between Ayreon and classic Rush. Mosher, the New York-based ultra musician created this second release as a veritable one man operation; playing most instruments, composing, arranging, producing the music and packaging the CD. And what a package it is ? over 72 minutes of ambient, neo-progressive cyber rock housed in a brilliant 16 page booklet of fantastic computer artwork, all done by Mosher himself.

The overall production of the music (which I'll get to in a minute) is also of the highest order. It's an extremely clean, powerful recording. The mix features boldly separated tracks and layers of subtleties that keep the music blazing on warp speed one moment, then echoing to an ethereal timber the next. Mosher is aided on several tracks by Todd Corsa's vocals and lead guitar and Mickey James on Bass. Corsa is a virtual deadringer for Geddy Lee and his vocals embellish the late seventies Rush sound. However, Mosher's work is far from a carbon copy. Though his use of computers and sampling is in the spirit of the day, there's enough melody and complexity in the compositions to make the music his own. Mosher's first release, "Ambient Earth", was ? as the title suggests ? more in the ambient, space/electronic vein. "Virtuality" is much more harder edged. Its cutting guitar thunders through the swirling vortex of keyboard sounds is highly reminiscent of Ayreon's work and will certainly appeal to Lucassen's legions of fans. I'm not about to single any song out because the whole CD is good, if not great in most places. Lyrics are included and create - according to Mosher - themes of industrial development, environmental destruction, and technological progress. Mosher has strong political views and his music lets them be known. The structure of "Virtuality" loosely follows a thematic parallel to Hawkwind's concerts, minus the sloppy playing and bad sound. You'll have a sweeping instrumental bridging longer, more developed tracks which may or may not incorporate vocals. The CD does not contain any filler whatsoever. With so much superb music to listen to on one CD and the great packaging that comes along with it, this has to be the buy of the year. And to add to that personal touch, you can buy the CD directly from the artist, at his website.

PROGVisions Top 10: Here is my top ten list: 2.SCOTT MOSHER VIRTUALITY 9.5. An amazing achievement for a single individual. Dense, clinging Ayreon-style cyber-rock with the odd vocal passages that are distinctly reminiscent of classic Rush. Brilliant packaging and 74 minutes of un-remitting music make this a great buy.

### PROGWERELD:

“VIRTUALITY merges the worlds of trance, ambient, new-age and metal forged in the fires of atmospheric neo-progressive song structures”. Well, that a mouth full. This sentence was not created by myself, it was mentioned in the promosheet of this album. Usually when I see such sentence I’m a bit sceptic to the music, but with this album the sentence could not be better! The music that Mosher creates is highly electronic. The use of keys, futuristic sounds and a heavy electronic drums are responsible for that. Together with the beautiful artwork (with lots of red in it) the album breathes science fiction.

After a rather spooky intro, Mosher shows in Upon the Frontiers of Infinity Night what he capable of. Heavy drums and nice keys are duelling with the guitar. The song blows you away. I want more! Todd Corsa is responsible for the vocals on Virtuality. The man’s nickname is “Shreddy Gee” and that name was not chosen by coincidence, he’s voice is very much the same as Geddy Lee (Rush). Listen for instance to Re-define. This song could have been on “Hold Your Fire” or “Power Windows” from that legendary trio. It has the same power, with a strong chorus and heavy drums. Also in The Promise Of Truth you can hear where Mosher found his inspiration. Corsa is also a very good guitar player. His solo’s on The Dreaming Eye and The Promise Of Truth are very good. On The Dreaming Eye, especially in the beginning of the song, it becomes clear that Mosher’s flirting with techo-trance. Put a beat under it and it can be played in every discotheque. In stead of a beat there are again the heavy drums that I like so much. Atillon Sunrise is the rest point of this album. A piece of music in the new-age style. On beautiful keyboard sounds, Mosher takes you away on a cloud of warm sounds. I must admit that I had never heard of Scott Mosher, but I’m impressed! Like a experienced barkeeper he takes bits of different styles, and mixes them into a delicious progressive cocktail. I invite everyone to taste it!

### QUINTESSENCE:

Another discovery through Transcending The Mundane is this solo artist from North Carolina (with a couple helpers anyway) that does some sort of ambient, theatric Rock meets Metal and Atmosphere with a bunch of other stuff like Trance/Techno and Gothic influences. It’s like splitting an atom with molecules of GTR/Asia/Yes with Jean Michael Jarre, Pink Floyd, Rush, Rik Wakeman (solo stuff), Chemical Brothers, Fear Factory and Braindance. It could pass as a movie soundtrack too come to think of it. The instrumental tracks are great on this also and the interludes in some of the songs which there’s 12 in all and racks over 72 minutes of music. Well-written all the way around and great guitar soloing; this guy isn’t afraid to go against the grain and the music reflects all this...very original and this guy would be great to make a tour with another review I did earlier for the project/band, Christopher.

### RADIO GHOSTY:

Forget that Scott Mosher is an incredibly talented artist and visionary. Never mind that his web site kicks serious artistic ass. And don’t even bother commenting on his lyrical mastery. Just sit down, shut the hell up and LISTEN. “Ambient neo-progressive cyber rock” my eye; this stuff is way too out of bounds to be pinned down so precisely. Virtuality contains wave upon wave of color, expression and mindscape, and is to be thoroughly enjoyed by most anyone with a yen for higher thought and a penchant for something emotionally meaty. Check out “Shores of a Cosmic Ocean”, “The Human Machine” and the title track from Virtuality.

### READ MAGAZINE:

The CD says to file under “ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock.” So what is that exactly? It’s fucking awesome, is what it is! Prog metal spliced with electronica, or vice versa, but with a real driving energy, unlike straight-up ambient. Hard-hitting drums, wailing guitar solos, heavy synths, and New Age lyrics and imagery combine for an aural experience of ROCK. This is music that begs for a laser light show. It kind of reminds me of Signals-era Rush, only way heavier. File under dope shit. - (EDITORS PICK)



### ROCKNET REVIEW:

Somehow Scott Mosher bumped into RockNet and - out of the blue - a short, but funny note came in the mail that Scott'd like to send us a promo copy of "Virtuality". Since the term he used to describe his music; 'Ambient Neo-Progressive Cyber Rock' confused the crap out of me, I kindly replied to please send over the promo. If only to make that crazy term clear to me. Well, I can't think of a much better description of this music myself, so I'll go along with Scott for the time being. This stuff is largely keyboard-based, yet guitar-driven progressive rock. The first thing I noticed was that the songs mostly open with a keyboard theme, that runs throughout the song, giving the album a consistent feel, and - indeed - an ambient mood. This is largely added to by the choice of keyboard and synthesizer sounds. Somewhat vintage in my ears, but still very modern sounding. The drums are programmed, and this is well audible. Though \*well\* programmed, and powerful sounding, I think a real-life drummer would add some more power and liveliness to the (excellent) material.

This record runs for over 72 minutes. This is a respectable length, and I can only applaud this. However, a fair amount of this playing time is used repetitively, by means of long intro's without much variation. This is fine with me, since it adds a certain tension to the material, but I can imagine some people getting annoyed with hearing the same theme, riff, or lick a dozen times after another. A good example of this would be "A Season Of Fire". Mr. Mosher does most of the playing on this himself, playing guitars, bass keyboards, programming, drums and voices. Guests include a certain Todd Corsa (vocals / Lead Guitar) and Mickey James (Bass). However, though some of the themes are somewhat repetitive and thematic, there's also material that sounds very atmospheric, like "Attilion Sunrise", with beautiful pads, and dreamy melodies, bringing new age to mind. Though nowhere near pentatonic, Kitaro comes to mind. The vocals fit in well enough. Personally I'd have liked a more powerful voice, especially on some of the heavier tracks, but then again that wouldn't do much good for the consistent quality of the material as it is. So I'm not complaining. Scott Mosher has recorded a respectable album. Great work!

### ROCK REPORT:

A while ago, I received this e-mail from an all American guy called Scott Mosher, asking me if he could send me a promotional package of his latest effort called "Virtuality". Of course I didn't say no and that's how I got to know this surprisingly professional looking product. Besides a long time musician and songwriter, Scott also is a graphical designer, which explains the fabulous cover and booklet artwork, and a human being with strong political, environmental, scientific and social ideas and - above all - a healthy dose of humour, such as the ever present 'Ukrainian glow-in-the-dark potato sprout' in the booklet.

But I'm supposed to write about music here, so let's start by saying that "Virtuality" is a convergence of Scott's musical, graphical and sociological ideas, which are all marked by a highly progressive approach. It reminded me a lot of the two Darkstar project albums when I first saw and heard it ("The Heart Of Darkness"...), but Mosher's music is softer and more electronical. He calls it ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock himself, which is not a bad description really. But the 72 minutes of - largely computer made - music on "Virtuality" are so diverse that it's almost impossible to label the genre. Even elements of techno and trance music pop up from time to time. Luckily for the variety factor of the disc, some songs feature narration (by Scott himself) and/or vocals by Tony Corsa. The latter reminded me of IQ's Peter Nicholls, but Corsa's not the world's best singer, which still is an understatement. The rest of the playing and producing duties were in the hands of Scott and bassist/producer Mickey James. Despite a few minor shortcomings, "Virtuality" offers a pleasant listening experience for open-minded people. Luckily for Scott, fans of progressive music are used to broadening their minds.

### ROCK REUNION:

What a great name for a musician, hehe. But don't expect any true metal hymns! This is one of the best self-releases I have ever listened to. As I already mentioned in our Q&A with Scott, I would even compare this record to legendary CDs like the ones of Torman Maxt and Vauxdvihl. Scott describes it as ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock. Not the worst description. After

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 30

the spacey intro "Upon The Frontiers Of Infinite Night", the album starts with the title track. Almost all instruments (guitars, sequencing, percussion and drum programming) are performed by Scott himself, Todd Corso is doing the vocals. And his voice reminds me a lot of Rush's Geddy Lee. The song "Virtuality" is led by a great keyboard melody and the dreamy vocal line. "The Human: Machine" starts like an electro-rocker or even trance track, with Scott performing some growled sci-fi spoken-words. But the chorus of this track is outstanding. Front 242 meets Peter Gabriel meets Fear Factory, haha. Also the rest of this CD is futuristic rock at its best. "Re-Define" sounds like an unreleased Rush track from the "Hold Your Fire" days. The sequencing of "The Dreaming Eye" reminds me a bit too much of a soundtrack for computer games, but with "The Promise Of Truth", there is another absolute highlight. Ambient keyboard sounds and many percussive elements support the hypnotic vocals of Todd Corso. The album ends with the 10 minute opus "Sorrow In A World Of Darkness", divided into three parts. A perfect way to close an almost perfect CD. Also the cover artwork and the booklet design are great and could have been done by an artist like Mattias Noren. I don't talk about the concept of the album and the artwork, check it out for yourself. This is a must-by for all fans of really progressive music, not just some senseless shredding. With some more guitar parts and some less ambient / trance elements, "Virtuality" would have even got full score. Contact the allround artists Scott Mosher at: [www.theambientmind.com](http://www.theambientmind.com). (9/10 points)

### SATAN STOLE MY TEDDYBEAR:

Scott Mosher is one of those modern self-made renaissance men. Not only is he a musician, but he does graphic design, website services and runs a small record label. With all that going on, it's a wonder he has time write and record his own music. But apparently he does set aside a few hours a day for that and the result is *Virtuality*, a fusion of progressive metal tendencies and an ambient backdrop. Mosher utilizes a very heavy array of synthesizer and ambient sounds, being very generous in their inclusion. The result sounds like a cross between Ayreon's futuristic, sci-fi metal and Anubian Lights (a Hawkwind ambient side project, for those not in the know) with Jean-Michel Jarre hints occasionally peeking in the door. As the lavish booklet and mood aptly demonstrate, there definitely are definitely futuristic leanings and moods throughout the CD. *Virtuality* does contain similar elements as labelmates F5 (whom Mosher has helped along the way), but is more calming and tranquil than F5. Mosher's singing is fairly plain, but doesn't detract from the music at all. The one issue I have with *Virtuality* that it tends to be just a tad too much to absorb in a single sitting. The length of the album is a bit more than what might be beneficial to most listeners. But other than being overlong, the album is enjoyable and recommended for those who like to listen to both melodic metal and ambient music. - Review by John Chedsey

### SCORE MUSIC REVIEW:

Initial Impression - Kimmie - "It's techno light". Cristy - "Please don't make me sit through a techno CD". Notable Lyric - "Sometimes we find our reality within the words of humanity, and sometimes we see the duality and find ourselves in perfect symmetry" from "Re-define" (Kimmie says: Dude, you're too serious. Relax and smoke a doobie will ya?) Factoid - Scott Mosher is trying to create a musical commentary on industrialized modern society. Serve With a Greenpeace t-shirt. Comments - "Virtuality" sounds like the beginning of Journey's "Separate Ways". Not like your bass-heavy pounding club techno, this CD is synthesizer-based and 80's influenced, including the upper end male melodic vocals. Kimmie breaks into Gary Neuman during the intro of "Season of Fire". It could be the chocolate-caramel alcohol concoction we're drinking but the underlying message is lost on us. Not to say that Mosher is musically inept, but those with a penchant toward rock may have difficulty sifting through his ambient electronic-based form.

### SEA OF TRANQUILITY:

If imitation is indeed the sincerest form of flattery, Arjen "Ayreon" Lucassen and the guys in Rush should be extremely proud. With *Virtuality*, multi-instrumentalist Scott Mosher has created a sci-fi novel of an album that merges the modern world "with a hypothetical and abstract ideal based on the environmental dilemmas that we are currently and irrevocably unwilling participants in," Mosher writes in the liner notes. You should also know that the esoteric, tedious and typo-riddled booklet

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 31

for Virtuality portrays Mosher as a pompous individual who clearly believes his “art, music and interactions with others” will change the world. That said, let’s discuss the music: Virtuality is overly long, with several synthesized instrumentals that seldom veer off in new musical directions. The songs with lyrics - about half of the 12 on offer here - are sung by Todd Corsa, who could be Geddy Lee from Rush if I didn’t know better. The songs themselves (complete with lyrics about “mystic light” and “cold alien logic” and “the omnipotence of time”) are actually quite good, as Corsa is a bold singer whose clear voice emerges triumphantly from Mosher’s bloated symphonic sequencing. The back insert of Virtuality suggests CD dealers “file under ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock.” I suggest they file it under symphonic spaced-out knockoffs. Yet the audio quality is superb for an independent release, and that alone makes Virtuality worth hearing. Added: August 23rd 2002, Reviewer: Michael Popke, Score:

### **SPIRIT OF RADIO REVIEW:**

Along the spine of the CD case (just after the title) are the words “Art Music Life,” and that seems to be what SCOTT MOSHER’S Virtuality is all about. It’s hard to separate any of those from the other because after reading Mosher’s biography and the liner notes, it’s plain that Virtuality encompasses all of them. A musician, graphics designer and self-proclaimed all-around nice guy, Mosher weaves his artistic abilities, songwriting skills and beliefs into the entity that is Virtuality to create what he calls “ambient neo-progressive cyber rock.” And you know what? I couldn’t have said it better myself. :)

Ranging from dreamy, spacey interludes to haunting atmospheric soundscapes, Virtuality paints a picture of surreal industrial landscapes, starlit skies, acrid smoke and humans losing touch with the natural environment in an increasingly resource-dependant world. The effect is achieved largely with layer upon layer of guitars and synthesizers that at times calls to mind early- and mid-80s era Rush, especially in the guitar department. Any similarity to one particular band is impossible to pin down, however, as Virtuality just doesn’t sound like anything I’ve ever heard before. A little metal, a little trippy techno, and a whole lot of ambience combined into some of the most original and interesting music to come across my desk in a long time. The music and the artwork are tied in, as well, and the CD booklet is as much fun as the CD itself. It would take me hours to delve into descriptions of the songs on Virtuality and to discuss the artistic talents, political views and social commentary that embody Scott Mosher’s work, so to learn more about Scott and what he’s all about, visit his website, The Ambient Mind. He’s certainly an interesting and talented fellow, and I look forward to seeing where he goes from here.

### **STATIC ZINE REVIEW:**

Self-described as ‘ambient neo-progressive cyber rock’, what more needs to be said? There’s a lot of great musicianship presented here, it’s all done by Scott with a little help from a few guests. I’m reminded of stuff like KANSAS and Steve Winwood listening to this and even ELP in the keyboards, but there’s some genuine song writing here. I’m not really into such polished sounds as this, it definitely is not heavy, but very creative and imaginative. I like the pitch-shifted vocals on track 3 The Human Machine but Scott’s normal vocals I could do without. I’m just not into such a light singing style. This would completely rule as an instrumental release. The intro tracks are my favorite ones.

### **STEEL MADNESS ZINE:**

12 tracks (72 mins) of ‘ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock’ music. I’m afraid that the long length of this CD and his type of music that might bore me. Well, not all but in fact, I’m surprise that I can accept this CD without much problem. From the 12 songs, some are just ambient instrumental and the rest are progressive rock with lyrics. Maybe like new Tiamat but this one has lots of good riffs. The music here is composed by Scott Mosher and performed by him with a guest handling some guitar part and a guy name Todd Corsa did some vocals. Not the kind of voice I like to hear. Scott also sings in one song but effect was used (I guess. I don’t think normal human sounded like that). I am not at all disturbed by the vocals because the music have dominant role in the song. The vocals only take a small part through out the songs. It has a thick booklet with nice design. Scott is also a graphic artist and you can see his talent here. “Virtuality” is not for orthodox metal fans. Lovers of ambient and progressive (that doesn’t have problem hearing both style mixed) should get this CD. (4.5/5 stars)

### STEVE HEGEDE REVIEW:

I noticed on the back cover of this CD a humorous-yet-serious little note asking to “file under: ambient neo-progressive cyber-rock”. Scott’s music is definitely ambient, and I can see where the term “cyber-rock” came from. However, I was sort of surprised to see the term “neo-progressive” used to describe the music. I’m certainly not a neo-progressive expert, so I was expecting something influenced by mid-70s Genesis, and the 80s neo-prog crowd. Scott’s music, though, is futuristic, and without even one drop of Genesis influence. A close description of the music could mention a mixture of 80s Jean-Michel Jarre (maybe even 80s-90s Klaus Schulze), with Dream Theater-like atmospheres (drumming, and melodies), and a hint of Rush.

To make more sense of that description, the drums tend to drive the music in a Portnoy-ish sort-of-way. There is a futuristic ambience to most of the tracks that might remind the listener of Jarre. And, as the CD unfolds, many of the vocals surprisingly start to sound like Geddy Lee. Scott’s take on ambient music is generally melodic, and engaging. I’m not a huge fan of pure ambient music. But Scott definitely wants the listener to focus in on the music even during the mellower, flowing, sections. All of the tracks are done using warm sounding digital keyboards, analog-like tones, metal-ish guitars, bass, and drums. An 80s production sound is noticeable throughout the CD, yet I don’t know of any 80s band that sounded like this. Jarre is a close comparison, but he was 100% electronic and doesn’t feature the metal-ish sounds favored by Moshier. So this CD is quite unique. Overall, *Virtuality* will appeal mostly to electronic, and ambient fans who are somewhat into metal, but if you’re a fan of both Rush and Dream Theater I’m sure you will like the more ambient moments on this album.

### STRUTTER MAGAZINE:

The bio says that this CD must be filed under Ambient Neo-progressive Cyber Rock! Well, I think it is a fair description, because most of these elements are present on SCOTT MOSHER’s CD. Multi-instrumentalist SCOTT MOSHER comes out of North Carolina and he has released a wonderful CD, filled with high quality Neo-progressive Rock. A lot of instrumental parts can be heard on the CD and I have to say not only the sound and production is very impressive, but also the way Scott plays the keyboards and guitars is terrific! Todd Corsa, who has an excellent melodic voice that can be heard on 4 songs, handles the lead vocals. These are the best songs on the album, namely “Virtuality” (great keyboard interlude, good neo-progressive melodic rocker), “Re-define” (excellent uptempo melodic prog/aor, best song of the whole CD), “The promise of truth” (superb HIGH QUALITY Neo-prog a la PENDRAGON) and “Sorrow in a world of darkness” (a dream for Neo-prog fans, playing length of 10 minutes, split in 4 parts). But the other songs are very good as well, only instrumental, still songs like “A season of fire”, “The dreaming eye” and “Sometime after midnight” are very impressive Neo-progressive rocksongs and a pleasure to listen to. I am glad to have heard this excellent Neo-progressive rock record, which reminds me a lot of SHAKARY, which we reviewed a few weeks ago. Go check it out. - (8/10 stars)

### SYNTH MUSIC DIRECT:

One of the advantages of running my own mail order business is that I can occasionally afford to be rather self indulgent and stock something that I just love even though I know very well a large proportion of my customer base wouldn’t normally buy. Such is the case with this release.

You see, even though the album is full of electronics some tracks are also extremely heavy in the drums and especially electric guitar department. What’s more about half the tracks have vocals. In my own mind I would call it apocalyptic cyber metal. This isn’t to say that there aren’t any tender moments ‘Attillion Sunrise’ and ‘Shores of a Cosmic Dream’ for instance are simply beautiful but for the most part its the sort of album that will get fans of New Age music running for their therapists.

OK, I’ve mentioned the ‘V’ word already but the vocals we have here are incredibly strong both stylistically and lyrically. Just take ‘Re-Define’ for instance, passion and energy just ooze from his voice. This track as well as most of what you have here musically would make Mark Shreeve’s ‘Legion’ seem like a gentle pastoral classical album. Its hard to put your finger on



## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 33

comparisons but think of a cross between Eloy, Murrillion and Haze. It does get a little AOR on 'The Promise of Truth' a bit like Asia or Boston but its done so well it would probably have been the best track either of these bands had ever done. You also get sequences, take 'The Dreaming Eye' three of them running hell for leather side by side already shaking the earth before a volcanic eruption of drums completely blast everything asunder. Though I keep going on about energy and power this is no mess of sound, the production is crystal clear, you can hear every element in the wonderful whole.

And as as for the musicianship, wow these guys sure know how to play! Mention must also be made of the packaging. The booklet contains sixteen pages of the most stunning full colour artwork combining cosmic images and those of a smoke spewing industrial hell. And guess what these pictures were also created by Scott. This is without a doubt one of my favourite CDs of 2001 both musically and visually. It took me back to the days of my youth when I hadn't even heard of Tangerine Dream but I knew what I liked, it was loud but melodic and most of the musicians made Edgar Froese look like an oil painting. I can't force people to like something which isn't to their taste but if you ever fancy putting something in the player that is a little different to what you might usually listen to then I can't think of anything better than this- warn the neighbours first though, its impossible to play it quietly.

### **TERRORIZER MAGAZINE:**

Maybe I'm not the right person to review this. As broad-minded as I claim to be, listening to 72-minutes of "trance-inspired" neo new age rock is not my idea of fun. VIRTUALITY may do all of the right things for fans of Malmsteen-like guitar theatrics and 80's synth pop, but I'm at a loss to understand why Mr. Mosher would want to approach music from such a bland, soul-destroying direction when the woes of the world ar more appropriately reflected in the severe sounds of black or death metal or hardcore.

### **TOMBSTONE:**

Essentially an album from someone who desperately wants to be David Coverdale. I'm hearing "Is this Love", for example, strongly in the title track. I actually like Whitesnake, 1987 being a classic of embarrassing 80s rock, but it doesn't mean we need new attempts with a new century. A new sound might work, so credit for Scott for trying to add a slightly more (80s) ambient sound. (5.5/10 points)

### **TRANSCENDING THE MUNDANE:**

Its' been a while since Scott Mosher's 1996 solo instrumental release, AMBIENT EARTH, and after listening to VIRTUALITY, I'd say it's been worth the wait. You get over 70 minutes of open minded progressive rock. Half the songs feature the vocals of Todd Corsa. Scott proves to be a very talented musician. VIRTUALITY is not your average progressive rock album as it embodies forward thinking techniques and a willingness to experiement. Scott creates all the music here by playing guitars, bass, keyboards, percussion and prgramming. Like his friend Chris from F5, Scott brings a sense of ambience to his keyboards. Corsa also proves to be a rea I find. He sounds very similar to Geddy Lee and you could even swear the infectious "Re\_Define" us a RUSH cover, but he has great command and an undeniable presence on songs like "Virtuality" and "The Human: Machine". There is no sense of urgency but Scott writes music with room to explore and VIRTUALITY never gets boring. The production is excellent and his trasteiful solos are always a pleasure to hear. - (90/100)

### **UMBRELLA ZINE:**

Check out the latest CD, VIRTUALITY - hip ambient neo-progressive cyber rock, and some very cool graphic design work ... (Jesta says YEAH, he's good). Hints of Geddie vocalization style, a few riffs like, um, those guys with the flyin' pigs and that wall (hehehe) ... and a hint of Vangelis, and a gentle touch o' Celtic influence ... aaahhhhhh BUY THE CD and feed your head well. He's also got a great sense of humor - we need more of this guy - oh, he's got a class graphic design business (Jesta is a GD, and says "he's good"). (Watch for a feature interview of Scott Mosher/Virtuality this spring!)

### UNDERGROUND ZINE SCENE:

VIRTUALITY combines trance, ambient, new age and progressive metal music along with lyrics that cover such topics as socio-political and environmental issues. "The Human: Machine" is an excellent piece that speaks of lost humanity taken over by cloning and bio-genetics. "A Season of Fire" is an excellent instrumental that is a two-parter, The Crimson Strain and Redstorm Rising. I love the ambience of "Attilon Sunrise". Scott's influences range from Dream Theater, Kitaro, Fates Warning, Tangerine Dream and they really show in some of the writing and arrangements but Scott definitely has his own sound and style. "Re-Define" definitely has some Rush influence as does "The Dreaming Eye" to a lesser degree. What's more, the artwork in the 16-page booklet was all done by Scott. Anyone into neo-progressive metal should check this out. - (8.5/10)

### UNDERTOW MAGAZINE:

I'm completely flabbergasted by this release. Scot Mosher (guitar, bass, keyboards, programming, percussion and voices) recorded more than 70 minutes of music. He only got the help of Todd Corsa who sang on two songs and played lead guitar on one song and Mickey James who played a bass solo. The bio says that "Virtuality" merges techno-trance, ambient, new-age and cinematic rock with neo progressive song structures. You can call it whatever you want but the musical landscape that is created on this album is atmospheric, dramatic, haunting and captivating. I would advise you to listen to this album with headphones and open your mind for a great journey into the musical mind of Scott Mosher. The music is richly layered epic and fantastically arranged. Sometimes dreamy and sometimes heavy, with other words you get the full spectrum of music on this disk. "Virtuality" reminds me at certain points of the music of Ayreon. The biggest different is however that Ayreon uses a whole battery of guest vocalists and musicians and that Scott did it all himself. Not only the music is top quality but also the packaging is very good. People who are into adventurous music should not think twice and order this album right away, you won't regret it. (9)

### UNDER THE VOLCANO:

Virtuality. This earlier effort by Mr. Mosher is as lush in musical cyberscapes as it is in digital imagery. The cheesy vocals aren't as prevalent as in the newer release, and there are more instrumentals. 'The Human: Machine' contains Mosher's own synthesized vocals now that's the sound of Space Rock! This CD is a good starting point for anyone interested in delving into the digital realm of Scott Mosher.

### UNIVERSITY OF DECIBEL/STEVE HUSK REVIEW:

It occurred to me during my drive home from Powermad 2001, while stuck in the Fort McHenry Tunnel and inhaling heavy doses of truck exhaust fumes, that the ambient rock cranking from my car speakers and reverberating against the tunnel walls was of a higher evolved form than the unconnected sounds which I previously associated with the "ambience" genre. Suffice it to say, my first meeting with ambient music did not go well. Back in my bachelor days, when my roommates and I competed in our house computer football league, some of them would play ambient albums during their games against me in the hopes of distracting and disorienting me. This 'music' was spacey, with no structure and no energy, and was, according to my taste and my interpretation, making no discernible point at all. My roomies apparently knew I held that opinion about ambient music, because, on the rare occasion that one of them actually defeated me, \*all\* of them loudly---and frequently---proclaimed that I was not able to handle the trance-like artistry of such an advanced musical form. (There will be a brief pause, while I laugh my ass off.)

I tend to believe my roomies went the 'psych warfare' route against me because they realized I had more football knowledge than any two of them combined. However, the possibility \*did\* occur to me that they were doing this as a direct result of my playing back-to-back-to-back Kansas songs in an attempt to distract and disorient \*them.\* Regrettably, the truth in this matter may never be known. Had Scott Mosher come up to me with a copy of VIRTUALITY in hand and touted it as ambient, I probably would have suffered through a few computer football flashbacks before politely declining. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to talk with him before I even found out he was a musician. Regardless of the subject matter, there was almost always a traceable

link from what Scott said to his political opinions, his sociological observations, and even his environmental convictions. Normally, somebody who feels the need to bring his personal beliefs into absolutely any and every topic of conversation runs the risk with me of rating high on my Obnoxious-O-Meter, which almost always leads to me coming up with new and improved ways of blanking that person out. However, I learned early on that Scott did \*not\* take the zealot-esque 'shove-my-point-of-view-down-your-throat' approach, but instead presented his viewpoints and opinions with enough open-endedness so that his discussional counterparts would feel they were being conversed with as opposed to being lectured. I was convinced that this same thoughtfulness and intelligence would find its way into Scott's sonic ! craft, so I snagged up a copy of "Virtuality" without even hearing a note.

It wouldn't have mattered anyway, because Scott took ambience in a direction I wasn't aware it could go. The music, in quite a few places, is so much more driving (a solid bass range, and guitar patterns that border along the thrash realm) than what this genre showed me before. Ergo: this is ambient music with teeth! If my former roommates tried playing an ambient album like VIRTUALITY during our games, I would have gone undefeated. Even when Scott calms down the pace and the mood, the final product is still several evolutionary eras beyond what my former roomies attempted to unnerve me with these melodic and mellow passages are more along the lines of structured orchestrations as opposed to endless chord sustains and meandering attempts at establishing a spacey feel for the sake of trying to come across as spacey.

Spinning this disc will be pleasing enough, but spending quality time with the booklet will give you a clearer understanding as to how much passion and overall artistic talent Scott crammed into the entire VIRTUALITY project. Amongst the liner notes is an analysis of himself and why he wrote the lyrics that he wrote. He even included Internet addresses of organizations he feels passionate about. In fact, there was so much Scott wanted to tell us, I had to rent the high voltage electron microscope at Berkeley Lab so I could read the tiny print. However, for those who are more visually based, the stories that Scott's fantastic graphic artwork want to tell you should more than suffice. Scott conceded to me that it might take a few additional listens for VIRTUALITY to sink in completely. Yet, I played it in its entirety almost once a day after Powermad for nearly a month, discovering something new with each listen, without reaching any kind of a saturation point. Actually, I don't think the 'overload' concept could ever apply to VIRTUALITY intelligent art, regardless of the genre and the delivery, never seems to wear thin with me.

### **VIOLENT SUNRISE:**

Friendly dude, Scott Mosher, of much verbose qualities, requested this to be filed under "ambient, neo-progressive cyber-rock." I'm sure all the Virtuality reviews have this phrase... I would agree if I could reminisce about the days of the mid 80s. I could imagine those rock kids feigning to the thought of their beloved Rush adopting New Wave tendencies. Spacey, flying through the Blade Runner sky... wow, flick that bic! Show me Terry Bozzio! Go Spyro Gyra! But hey those were great days cuz keyboards dominated and were actually referred to synthesizers, and the synths probably had better sounds than those found on prog metal today. Its cool to hear this stuff set to rock drums. The talent is admirable on synth, on guitar, on everything else but one thing... So I am only hung up on the singer on a few of the songs. There's a guy who does approach Geddy Lee tone but not Geddy Lee ability. He's more like some Italia-disco freestyle singer who seems to try too hard. But with Scott Mosher's ambidextrous, multi-disciplines (I'm trying to adopt his lingo here) we could get something that approaches the explorations of today's new age/techno/DJ albums. (2.5/5)

### **XAOC MAGAZINE:**

Scott Mosher could easily put among XAOC Magazine's top discoveries of last year. His second solo album, VIRTUALITY is a piece of art which most surely will be strongly admired by the lovers of beautiful and thoughtful music. Just for the record - Scott's first band appearance was in the lines of the 'funcore thrashers' Horsemeat and their gorgeous effort 'Meet the Meat' (95). Scott's first solo effort was called AMBIENT EARTH (96) and embodied the first wave of his ambient/new age instrumental rock. Generally, VIRTUALITY is much more solid, better recorded, and offers more refined musical ideas. There are not so many

## VIRTUALITY (2001) CD REVIEWS >> PAGE 36

bands that can be put among the obvious influences so I'll only mention the 80's work of Tangerine Dream and Vangelis' Blade Runner. The overall mood is truly magical and relaxed. Tracks like "Virtuality" are more rock-oriented and up beat while most of the album offers calmer, well planned and well executed psychdelia. Scott's keyboard playing is the leading factor for the music. It's simple but very effective and spacey. We should also pay attention to the fine leads of the mainman and his guest guitarist Todd Corsa. Although the production and the mix still leave what to be desired, when the music is good, the rest is not of the biggest importance. It's absolutely necessary to try to understand the lyrical and visual concept of the album, which offers the spiritual and social searches of a contemporary man. Scott's view is interesting for us because it is carried in light of his artistic intuition, something not so many of us possess. There are truly wonderful places that carry the flame of a big future perspective, therefore I'm expecting something really serious from Scott to come up by the end of this year, when the next record is expected. An almost brilliant job! - (4/5)

### ZINE SCENE:

Viruality combines Trance, Ambient, New age and Progressive metal music along with lyrics that cover such topics as socio-political and environmental issues. The Human Machine is an excellent piece that speak of lost humanity taken over by cloning and Biogenetics. A Sense of Fire is an excellent instrumental that is a two parter, The Crimson Strain and Redstorm Rising. I love the ambience of Attilian Sunrise. Scott's influences range from Dream Theater, Kitaro, Fates Warning, Tangarine Dream and they really show in some of the writing and arrangements but Scott definitely has his own sound and style. Re-Define definitely has some Rush influence as does The Dreaming Eye to a lesser degree . What's more the artwork in the 16 page booklet was all done by Scott. Anyone into neoprogressive metal should check this out! - 8.5/10