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APRIL 2022

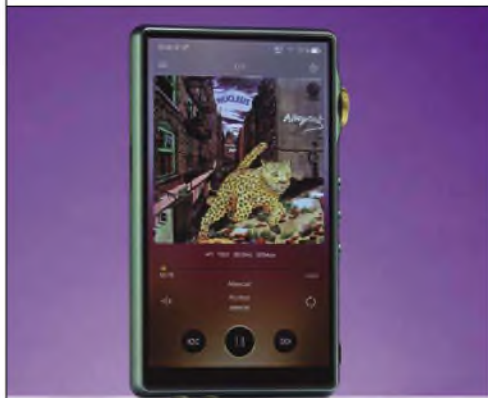
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**SIX PAGES OF LETTERS - THE BEST WINS A PAIR OF  
ACOUSTIC ENERGYS NEW AE100<sup>2</sup> LOUDSPEAKERS! (UK ONLY)**

**T**he album – nicely mastered – is promoted as the first Jethro Tull album in 18 years but really, it isn't, is it? It's a rebadged solo album. It's not as if band leader, Ian Anderson returns to any sort of older core band when he picks up the Tull banner because there's no-one to go back to. Everyone's gone - in one form or another. The current, post-Millennium backing band has appeared on a range of recently released Anderson solo projects. This album is a marketing exercise designed to drum up a prog frenzy from the Tull faithful.

It is also a 12-track, song-based album. That is, Anderson pops in, gives you the message and gets out. Of the twelve tracks here, nine time in under four minutes each. There's no complex prog work out here. This is an album from a singer songwriter.

Anderson rails against the world and its dark corners

including. Everything from Donald Trump and "hate and prejudice", to drunken teenage revellers.

The album's core is religion. Specifically, the Bible. The Bible is all over this release. Literally. Many of the tracks feature chapter and verse references to specific passages of the Bible.

Mastering is good, although not great for a modern presentation. Mids are pushed to the edge while bass is hardly organic in tone.

I like Anderson's focus on themes. I appreciate that he has targets. He's got a lot to get off his chest. I like the fact that he's not spending an hour saying 'Ooo Baby'. I'm impressed with all of the performances on this album, including his own. The album is professional, skillfully executed and artfully discharged but I never felt energised, excited or elevated. To Anderson on this album, the message seemed more important than the songs.



## JETHRO TULL

The Zealot Gene  
Inside Out

# AUDIOPHILE CD

**V**olume 1 of this impressive archival series followed the story of Mitchell The Younger, getting to grips with her talent, creating demos, building confidence within live scenarios and the like. Creating an artistic foundation, in other words, finding her boundaries, discovering her capabilities.

This box set moves the story into a more hectic and demanding existence.

From the 1968 debut 'Song to a Seagull' that includes home demos and a major live outing of twenty-three tracks at the Le Hibou Coffee House (1968) plus outtakes from the album.

Then we're straight into 'Clouds' combining home-based demos, TV-based demos (the Dick Cavett Show in 1969 is one of those) and the 1 February 1969 Carnegie Hall concert (22 tracks).

There's a fascinating sense of evolution that derives from

combining the familiar with the rough and ready, that are sometimes dependent on location. So demos at friend's houses tend to be more 'kick-back-and-relax' affairs. The creation process is also illustrated as some songs feature wordless singing while the right words are still to be found.

What is impressive is the speed of this evolution. That Carnegie appearance contrasts, sometimes starkly, with some of the early versions of the same song just a year earlier.

'Ladies of the Canyon' (1970) is explored via a range of 1969 demos while the masterful 'Blue' (1971) is addressed during a BBC 'In Concert' rendition of twenty-three tracks and more.

Mastering is varied, as you might expect from a compilation – yet Rhino has done a good job. Nevertheless, the point of this set is that it exists in the first place. Essential for Mitchell fans.



## JONI MITCHELL

Archives - Volume 2: The Reprise  
Years (1968-1971)  
Rhino