

## A couple of '70s-Vintage Spectacular Analog Demo Tracks that Happen to be Great Music:

From the mind of a true musical genius, the late Greg Lake (1947-2016)

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Growing up in the 1970's, I can assure you that Emerson, Lake and Palmer's *From The Beginning* and *Still, You Turn Me On* were staples of great FM airplay. They are sophisticated, haunting and somewhat moody and quirky, but simply gorgeous ballads penned by Greg Lake that still stand way out in their catalog.



They also happen to be very well recorded with superb dynamics

and tonal naturalness that rival the best of a contemporary, Cat Stevens. The acoustic guitar work in *From the Beginning* is simply stunningly natural. Layers of tracks appear and build skillfully with complex but fully separated synth passages that spread out in a vast, studio-created vivid panorama. *Still, You Turn Me On* has kind of a baroque flavor with Greg's old English troubadour vocal stylings alternating with crushingly loud guitar-laden responses. Trust me, this stuff will pin you to the wall if your stereo is up to the task. Another famous track by Greg, *Lucky Man*, was a great commercial success for them but is a bit more spectacular than natural in terms of pop-music production values.

Their domestic Atlantic LPs have very good sound, especially the earlier, original pressings. CD reissues are hit and miss, with the Rhino reissues leading the pack, sonically. Of course, the original British import LPs on Manticore take everything to a much higher level on every level. Highly worth pursuing.

It goes without saying, but I will anyway. Music this personal, this intricate and breathtaking is hardly heard anymore. Treasure and keep it alive for yourself.

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