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## **DUST BIN** Masquerade - *Pinocchio* ...And The Rise Of Disco Prog

posted by **TERRY MILLER** on MAY 7 at 13:42 PM

**Boris Midney** emigrated to the United States from the Soviet Union in the late '60's. Once in New York he began a musical career that would take him to the heights of popularity during the disco era. He was a talented multi-instrumentalist and producer who had a huge impact on Disco. Especially in the vein of the long thematic albums that would shape a sub-genre of Disco I like to call **Progressive Disco**, or **Disco Prog**. One of his albums in particular, *Beautiful Bend* is one of the greatest productions of the decade in any musical style. Boris never released music under his own name, he always made up fictitious group names for his various excapades. Today's Dust Bin choice, in particular, totally exemplifies the style of Boris' thematic Progressive Disco.





**Masquerade** was a project from 1979 on Prelude records. Once again Boris did most of the work with the exceptions of the strings, guitars and drums. The two completely mixed sides tell the story of Pinocchio's birth, travels, troubles and his homecoming. But true to Midney's form it's not a direct story as much as an assemblage of themes and emotions that are brought out by the music in a number of dancefloor fillers. Some of the track titles allude directly to the story (*Don't Leave Me Hanging, Wooden-Wooden Puppet*) and others are a little more abstract (*I'm Attached To You, Open The Secret Door*). Through the seven "scenes" the album manages to relay the main themes of Pinocchio's story without getting all Disney-ish and treacle-y.

The two sides combine to make a nice 34 minute story, which I think follows in the vein of some of Prog's best footsteps; long songs, progressive music and thematic connections. Die-hard Prog fans may think I'm daft, but I believe this to be the logical step beyond and outside of the conventions prog was stuck in at the time. Groups like Yes and Genesis (as well as too many others to name) were trying to find ways to make their music more "pop" and successful, and by doing so were

ending up with albums full of shorter radio friendly tracks. While possibly producing a few hits this trend was basically driving nails through the heart of what was then known as "Prog".

I believe that what Boris Midney and other long-form, Progressive Disco producers of the time (**Alec Constandinos, Cerrone**....) were doing was laying the groundwork for artists who were coming along with electronics and synths, ready to give the world a different kind of experience. Not just music to listen to while sitting in front of your record player getting stoned, but one in which the listener could become an active participant on the dance floor. Then with the death of disco, they could lead us back in front of our stereos again, but this time with a greater acceptance and understanding of electronic and dance music (**Jean-Michel Jarre, Vangelis**....).

You can sample both tracks [at my blog, here](#).

PERMALINK

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