

Puluche Album Review Rubric ©

Artist: Pink Floyd

Album Title: Animals (1977) - Harvest/EMI

Criteria

Rating

Categories	4 - Exemplary	3- Proficient	2 - Developing	1 - Underdeveloped	Rating
<u>Compositions</u>	Every song is quality and has a distinctive appeal of its own. Tracks have a perfect flow and continuity that enhance the album's overall appeal.	Many quality songs with distinctive appeal. Tracks have a good flow and continuity that enhance the album's overall appeal.	Some quality songs with distinctive appeal but not sustained. Track flow and continuity have little effect on album's overall appeal.	Few to no quality songs lacking any distinctive appeal. Track flow and continuity have little/poor effect on album's overall appeal.	20
<u>Breaking Ground</u>	Has impressive elements of high creativity and is experimentally innovative. Developing own signature sound. Shows extreme growth and/or potential as a substantial and influential artist.	Features elements of creativity and uniqueness. Shows growth and/or potential as a developing and influential artist.	Has very few moments of creativity and uniqueness. Shows little growth and/or some potential as a developing artist. Displays some stagnation or notable regression as an established artist.	Has no creativity and uniqueness. Shows no growth and/or little potential as a developing or established artist.	20
<u>Engagement</u>	Music has a transcending quality with numerous songs that grab the listener on respective emotional/social levels. Many songs have an addictive effect and memorable quality.	Music has transcending qualities with some songs that grab the listener on respective emotional/social levels. Some songs have an addictive effect and memorable quality.	Music has some transcending qualities with few songs that appeal on respective emotional/social levels, as well as having any addictive or memorable qualities.	Music has minimal transcending qualities and few to no songs that appeal on respective emotional/social levels. No positive memorable qualities.	20
<u>Lyrics</u>	Has a strong lyrical voice with multiple thought-provoking messages with clear and/or possible meanings and depth.	Has notable lyrical voice with some thought-provoking messages and/or possible meanings and depth.	Has limited lyrical voice with few-to-no thought-provoking messages, meanings and depth.	Has a weak lyrical voice with no thought-provoking messages or meanings and seriously lacks any depth.	20
<u>Production</u>	Masterful sound quality with noticeable studio techniques employed that demand headphone inquiry. Vision flawlessly executed. Overall packaging and artwork effectively compliments and enhances album enjoyment.	Very good sound quality with some noticeable studio techniques that demand headphone inquiry. Vision is acceptable. Overall packaging and artwork compliments album enjoyment.	Inconsistent sound quality with questionable studio techniques employed. Vision is questionable. Overall packaging and artwork fails to compliment album.	Questionable to poor sound quality. Lacks vision. Overall packaging and artwork fails to compliment album.	20

Comments

Arguably one of the most highly regarded bands throughout the history of rock music is Pink Floyd, and there's really no solid argument refuting the declaration. Not many bands have released perfect albums and *Animals* would be their third in a row followed by a fourth.

Released in 1977, *Animals* came right in the midst of Pink Floyd's apex in the music world just four years after *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973) and two years before *The Wall* (1979), both of which are two of the most critically acclaimed and best selling albums of all-time regardless of genre. And let's not forget *Wish You Were Here* (1975) - a pretty impressive run.

Always known for their unique approach to making music, *Animals* certainly fits that same thread. A concept album quite unlike any other, the five track, 42 minute album delivers in every aspect that an album can offer: musically grasping, thought provoking lyrics, and a message powerful enough that only a select few bands have ever been able to replicate or mimic. Adding all these qualities to the fact that it's a concept album makes *Animals* just that more praiseworthy.

Some considerable time could be spent discussing the intricacies what the concept of the album portrays, but to keep it fairly succinct, *Animals* is a critical commentary on the nature of capitalism in the same nature that George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is a literary critique of communistic society. For those familiar with Orwell's masterpiece, the dogs/sheep/pigs similarities come as no surprise. However, *Animals* departs from the former in that its critique focuses on the destructive nature of class within capitalistic society a la Marxian theory. To really understand and appreciate *Animals* for what it really is, it's crucial to look at each of the five tracks individually before piecing them together into the story it creates.

The first of these tracks "Pigs on the Wing (Part One)" is a short track that sets the stage for the forthcoming tracks. Originally a full three minute song, the band decided to split it into two segments: one to begin the album and one to end. What's unique about "Pigs on the Wing (Part One)" is its gentler, less gloomy delivery than the following three tracks before picking back up into the second part of "Pigs on the Wing," which brings back the more lighthearted sound.

"Dogs," the album's second and longest track, comes in at 17 minutes and embraces the more melancholy approach that listeners hear in the follow two tracks as well. This "chapter" of the album is purported to focus on the dark side of capitalist businessmen. The galloping music gives way to a more somber style featuring synthesizers about halfway through the track before reverting back to the rhythmically guitar driven sound featured at the beginning of the track.

"Pigs (3 Different Ones)" is an 11 minute song that differs from the other album tracks in its more bluesy, bass driven approach. Still featuring a dreary sound to fit the theme of the album, the lyrics fit very closely with Orwell's *Animal Farm* in that the pigs are the "leaders" of the society that are, unsurprisingly, disliked.

"Sheep" is the album's final marathon-like song at 10 minutes and is a much more edgy rock sound. More powerful vocals and a more prominent lead guitar lead to a brief interlude of synthesized, downtrodden music before picking back up again into the "victorious" sound that the track embodies. The victorious sound is to represent the victory of the lower class becoming triumphant in their overtaking of the bourgeois. The album then concludes with "Pigs on the Wing (Part Two)," reverting back to the lighthearted, hopeful sound featured in the album's introduction.

<p><u>Commendations</u></p>	<p>The story in <i>Animals</i> is a good story within itself. However, it's the music behind the lyrics that make it truly unique in that they replicate the feeling of the moment such as the "Sheep" becoming victorious in the final segment. The energy filling the music meshes incredibly well with the lyrics, creating what can easily be considered one of the greatest concept albums of all time.</p> <p>Although <i>Animals</i> didn't receive the same level of praise the two previous releases <i>Dark Side of the Moon</i> or <i>Wish You Were Here</i> did, it still went on to receive high levels of critical acclaim. The album peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard 200 charts and went on to be certified 4x platinum. What is more noteworthy is the David Gilmour quote expressing that he felt the band had nothing more to prove after <i>Animals</i>, which lead into the Roger Water's written <i>The Wall</i>, and ultimately the bands break-up shortly thereafter.</p>
<p><u>Next Steps</u></p>	<p>Probably the most incredible thing about Pink Floyd during the 1970s and 1980s is that <i>Animals</i> might have been their least well-received album out of the four aforementioned albums listed above in terms of sales, but to many Pink Floyd fans it is their favorite album.</p> <p><i>The Wall</i>, which followed <i>Animals</i> in 1979 has gone on to sell 33 million albums worldwide making it one of the most commercially successful albums in history. However, the departure of Roger Waters in 1985 and the newly led Pink Floyd under the stewardship of David Gilmore wasn't ever able to capture the same magic as the mid-60s through mid-80s Pink Floyd. And although the band's ability to collaborate deteriorated in their final few years, what music fans are left with are some of the best albums one can ever listen to.</p>
<p><u>Reviewer</u></p>	<p>Carl Whitaker</p> <p style="text-align: right;">IRC: Bill Pulice</p>