

# THE AARON CLIFT EXPERIMENT

## If All Goes Wrong AARON CLIFT

Imagine Dream Theater with a more obvious melodic hue.

There's much to admire about this trio from Austin, Texas. They're prepared to tap into the influence of Rush, Marillion and King Crimson, without ever being formulaic. So while opening track *Faith* crashes through with blues rock power, courtesy of some scorching guitar from Van Wilks (one of many guests brought in), *Better Off Before* has a Beatles-style psychedelic quirkiness, and *Castle In The Sky* has a jazz fusion approach. The upshot is an album that sounds like Dream Theater, yet with its own melodic freshness. Aaron Clift



himself has a voice that tells a story, and Dave North adds dramatic guitar touches that neatly complement Clift's own keyboard swathes. On occasion, such as with the clambering *Dream Within A Dream*, the underlying atmosphere is the main dynamic. They can also convincingly range from pure power to more delicate inferences in the same song, as happens on both *Savage In A Fancy Suit* and *Wild Hunters*. The highlight here is the title track, though, bringing to mind *Trick Of The Tail*-era Genesis. However, the album is very charismatic and enticing throughout. **MD**