

= From the Ages =

From the Ages is the third full @-@ length studio album by American rock band Earthless . It was released on October 8 , 2013 by Tee Pee Records . It had been six years since the band ' s last full @-@ length studio album , Rhythms from a Cosmic Sky , as all three members of Earthless were pre @-@ occupied with other matters , including other bands .

The album comprises four songs , all instrumental , and was recorded in two days . Much of the album ' s material had existed in the band ' s live repertoire before , in particular the album ' s title track had been released in an early form on the band ' s 2008 live album Live at Roadburn , and the rest of it was created during the recording sessions and rehearsals . Despite the band ' s preference for analog tape , the title track had to be recorded digitally to accommodate its length .

The album was released to mostly positive critical reaction , with criticisms usually directed at the length of the material (and of the title track in particular) amid praises for its composition and depth . A number of publications cited the album as one of the best 2013 releases on year @-@ end lists . Earthless earned two nominations at the San Diego Music Awards , and From the Ages became the band ' s second album to win the Best Hard Rock Album award there .

= = Background and recording = =

Earthless ' last studio album , Rhythms from a Cosmic Sky , had come out in 2007 , and their live album Live at Roadburn (on which an early version of " From the Ages " was recorded) in 2008 ; further releases had been delayed since then as members of Earthless were becoming increasingly pre @-@ occupied with other matters . Constant touring in 2008 and 2009 kept the band out of the studio , drummer Mario Rubalcaba began playing with Off ! and guitarist Isaiah Mitchell became involved with Howlin ' Rain . Mitchell also moved to northern California , which reduced the available time to rehearse with Earthless (who are based in San Diego) . After three rehearsals , the band recorded the album in two days , recording much of it live the first day and additional details the following day , in San Francisco with producer Phil Manley in his studio , Lucky Cat Recording .

= = Song information = =

The songs on the album began as " very loose , general ideas " according to Rubalcaba , who also said " Violence of the Red Sea " was the most organized , structured song on the album (although he later said the same of the title track) . Eginton wrote the bass lines for " Violence of the Red Sea " , inspired by funk and " prog @-@ psych " bands from the UK and Europe . The song , which had been included in the band ' s concert setlist for the last few years prior to recording , was named after the combination of riffs and tempos which " collid [ed] together like an angry sea " . The song ' s finale was present in the band ' s repertoire for almost a decade and was used to close the song for the tension it created , whereas the opening of the song was considered more of a " laid back groove " . After Rubalcaba and Eginton had outlined the song ' s bass guitar and drum parts in Mitchell ' s absence (due to now living elsewhere) , Mitchell was allowed to improvise lead guitar over them when he was able to play with the duo .

" Uluru Rock " was named after the Uluru rock formation in Australia , as an homage to the country , and was written by Mitchell and Eginton through improvisations while they waited for Rubalcaba to get on stage to begin the band ' s first show in the country . At the time the band had not been to the landmark . As a tribute to the natives , the song was specifically named Uluru as opposed to Ayers Rock , the landmark ' s other official name . " Uluru Rock " became the opening song on the band ' s setlist for all shows thereafter .

" Equus October " was born out of a song that the band were considering discarding because they were never able to finish it until they entered the studio and changed their minds , wanting more material on the album . They decided to use a riff from it only as an interlude that ran 30 seconds long , but they came up with more ideas about what to do with it during the mixing process , eventually increasing the length of the song . Rubalcaba explained that the bass guitar line

remained a constant fixture on jam sessions between himself and Eginton , and they decided to give it a chance by recording it at the album 's sessions . Once Mitchell also began adding material to the song , Rubalcaba felt it started taking on a " strong & majestic yet mournful " sensation , almost as if it were about a ritualistic sacrifice . He later discovered the ritual of the October Horse and based the song 's title on that of the ritual . " It took on the feeling I had about the jam & how it just completely comes crashing down so abruptly at the end , " he explained . Expanding the song in the studio led the group to want to use it as an interlude that leads into the album 's title track .

" From the Ages " was recorded for the band 's live album *Live at Roadburn* five years before and , being very long , was described by Rubalcaba as " a bastard to play [and relearn] " . The band wanted to record it in as few takes as possible in spite of its length , which they addressed by recording the song in Pro Tools as they expected it could be up to forty minutes long ; in the past they used analog tape which only allowed for about twenty minutes of music but , according to Rubalcaba , yielded the best recording quality . Earthless rehearsed " From the Ages " for three days before recording it in about three takes . In the last five minutes of the song , the band very gently ease into the end , to avoid having to end the song abruptly . Although he had said the same of " Violence of the Red Sea " with respect to the album itself in a previous interview , Rubalcaba later described " From the Ages " as the most organized , planned song the band had yet ever recorded , let alone recorded for this album . He described the mixture of influences in the song as " A supreme psycho @-@ delic buffet served up with all the sour Kraut , all the freshest sushi Japan has to offer & what not " . Rubalcaba reiterated the " pre @-@ historic , caveman , dry & mysterious wasteland feel " that inspired the title . The song expanded constantly during rehearsals and evolved after its debut on *Live at Roadburn* .

= = Release and reception = =

From the Ages was released on October 8 , 2013 , by Tee Pee Records . The artwork was created by artist Alan Forbes , whose work Rubalcaba commended as " captur [ing] [the phrase " From the Ages "] to a T " .

From the Ages charted at # 25 on the Billboard Heatseekers chart for a week . Critical reaction to the album was largely positive , though the album 's length was commonly cited as a minor flaw . Metacritic reported a score of 84 based on five reviews , indicating " Universal acclaim " . " Though the silence may have been deafening for their small but devoted cadre of fans , the wait was worth every moment , " wrote Erik Highter for PopMatters , who described the chemistry between the band members as " near telepathic connections between the players " and the roles of Eginton and Rubalcaba as " pulling " Mitchell back from potential unrestrained solos . He rated the album 8 out of 10 , his only complaint being that listeners may consider the title track too long . Conversely , Grayson Currin of Pitchfork Media said that the rhythm section did not serve to restrain Mitchell at times , but to " instead follow his ecstatic lead everywhere , fellow travelers on his odyssey of enthusiasms " . He echoed Highter 's opinion with respect to the title track 's length , calling it " the one moment [on the album] where the band 's patience might test your own " and asked , regarding the length and repetitive nature of the album as a whole , " is there a need for an hour of three dudes tracing and retracing a melody ? " The length of " From the Ages " was also criticized by Exclaim ! reviewer Trystan MacDonald who cited it as the record 's " only flaw " and rated the album overall 8 out of 10 .

eMusic contributor Dan Epstein rated the album 4 @.@ 5 stars out of 5 and described the interaction between band members similarly to Highter and Currin , saying that , while Mitchell 's guitar leads are prominent , Eginton and Rubalcaba are " locked @-@ in " with him and each other , " never los [ing] focus or intensity for a second ? not even during the rolling 30 @-@ minute title track . " In his review for NOW Magazine , John Semley said that while inferior to *Rhythms from a Cosmic Sky* , the high point was the opening track , " Violence of the Red Sea " , and the album is " an essential record for anyone who likes the sound of guitars sounding like guitars " . Karen A. Mann also wrote , for the heavy metal section of About.com , that the opening track was the band 's peak performance on the album , which she rated 4 out of 5 . Rolling Stone referred to the album as

one of the 20 best metal albums of 2013 , while Magnet named it the third best of the year 's top ten hard rock releases . Likewise , the Austin Chronicle ranked it ninth in the top ten metal releases of 2013 , and later reviewer Raoul Hernandez gave the album a perfect four @-@ star review . Earthless were again nominated for Best Hard Rock Artist at the 2013 San Diego Music Awards , and the record won the 2014 award for Best Hard Rock Album , becoming the band 's second record to do so (their debut Sonic Prayer won the award in 2007) .

In support of the album , Earthless toured the west coast of the United States in October 2013 , with the Shrine in Australia from December 2013 to January 2014 , and the east coast of the US in August 2014 . They also embarked on a tour of Europe that fall . The band had planned a tour of Japan with Eternal Elysium , but were forced to cancel the engagement to tend to ill family members ; they rescheduled it for January 2015 .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by Earthless .

" Violence of the Red Sea " ? 14 : 46

" Uluru Rock " ? 14 : 08

" Equus October " ? 5 : 42

" From the Ages " ? 30 : 55

= = Personnel = =

= = = Earthless = = =

Isaiah Mitchell ? guitar

Mike Eginton ? bass guitar

Mario Rubalcaba ? drum kit

= = = Additional personnel = = =

Credits taken from the album 's liner notes .

Phil Manley ? producer , mixer

Isaiah Mitchell ? mixer

Mario Rubalcaba ? mixer

Carl Saff ? mastering

Alan Forbes ? cover art

Mike Eginton ? inside art

Ake Arndt ? album layout

Operation Mindblow ? liquid overlays

= = Chart positions = =