



Band Members:

Steve Adams – guitar, vocals

Merrill Hale – drums, keyboards

Discography:

Serai (2005)

The Last Kingdom (2005)

The Magi (2007)

Solomon's Key (2007)

Turn of the Tide (upcoming)

Merrill Hale (971) 404-4175

merrill@thearzuniverse.com

<http://www.thearzuniverse.com>

ARZ is the moniker given to the two man progressive rock act comprised of guitarist Steve Adams and drummer Merrill Hale. The two Portland, OR area musicians met and cemented their working relationship while both were members of the local Yes tribute act, All Good People (AGP). ARZ had previously been Adams's one man instrumental band (playing all guitars, bass and programmed drums) and releasing four CD's, two from 2005 *Serai* and *The Magi*, and *The Last Kingdom* and *Solomon's Key* from 2007. These recordings present the guitarist's wide influences ranging from classical to hard rock and metal, with an emphasis on unison riffing and balanced songwriting and arrangements.

Upon the demise of AGP, Adams established a kindred relationship with Merrill Hale based on the two's passion for classic progressive rock and creating their own vocal based originals. Adams had been looking to revisit his ARZ project with the right chemistry to craft pieces focused on complex arrangements, but with a more direct approach. The result can be heard specifically on *Solomon's Key* (ARZ' 4th album) that features Hale's hand and footwork on the title track and "Burning Bush". The percussionist fits the bill as Adam's right hand man and prime collaborator coming from the Neil Peart/Alan White school of the "take no prisoners" drumming style. The duo's focus is on par with stripped down acts such as the Benevento Russo Duo who rely exclusively on electronics and musician interplay to get their point across to audience. The incorporation of Midi instrumentation allows them to play multiple parts at once giving them and full band sound on stage as well as in the studio. New pieces such as "Hope and Glory" revive the passion of vintage Emerson, Lake and Palmer, while other tracks such as "Light the Sky" and "Birth of a Hero" present Adam's as a competent singer drawing from influences such as Rush and Jethro Tull.

The group is in the process of preparing their fifth album and is generating major label interest.

"What the two of you manage to do in a live context is quite impressive and the arrangements are ingenious." – Edward Macan, author of Rocking the Classics: English Progressive Rock and the Counterculture and Endless Enigma: A Musical Biography of ELP

"...neo-prog in the style of YES, GENESIS, RUSH, FOCUS, IQ...Without a doubt the 2 CDs are a pleasure to listen to, with Steve's musicianship reaching a very high level. Any prog fan will love this band..." Gabor Kleinbloesem - Strutter Magazine