



Sticking with the cream of the fusion spectrum the original all conquering line up of **MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA** are heard seriously ablaze throughout **Birds Of Fire** the

sequel to their explosive debut album from '71 *The Inner Mounting Flame* which was essentially the big bang which simultaneously catapulted the band on their trajectory to the heavens while also setting the musical standards for all that was to follow. Originally released on CBS in early '73 and now reissued as an audiophile spec vinyl edition by Speakers Corner (★★★★★) in comparison with its predecessor *Birds Of Fire* feels like a more streamlined piece of work with the band having had their focus sharpened by spending a sizeable part of the previous year on the road. From the majestic opening of the title track through the magnificent 'Miles Beyond' - a moody Fender Rhodes groove driven tribute to who else but Miles Davis (whose inspiration it was that planted the fertile seed that ultimately blossomed into the Mahavishnu Orchestra thanks to the vision and virtuoso performance levels attained by John McLaughlin in the company of his fellow travellers Messrs Cobham, Hammer, Goodman and Laird whom he sought out to join him in the original incarnation of the band), the lightning-paced free fire riff blitz 'Celestial Terrestrial Commuters', the classic Mahavishnu-esque contours of 'Hope' and 'Sanctuary' to the concluding 'Resolution' with its gloriously all powerful ascending motif 'Birds Of Fire' is paint blisteringly intense in its power but would alas prove to be the final studio offering from the fabled Mahavishnu Mk 1.