



Worthless!

Copernicus

Nevermore, Inc. - NCD2093

Available from [Moonjune Records](#).

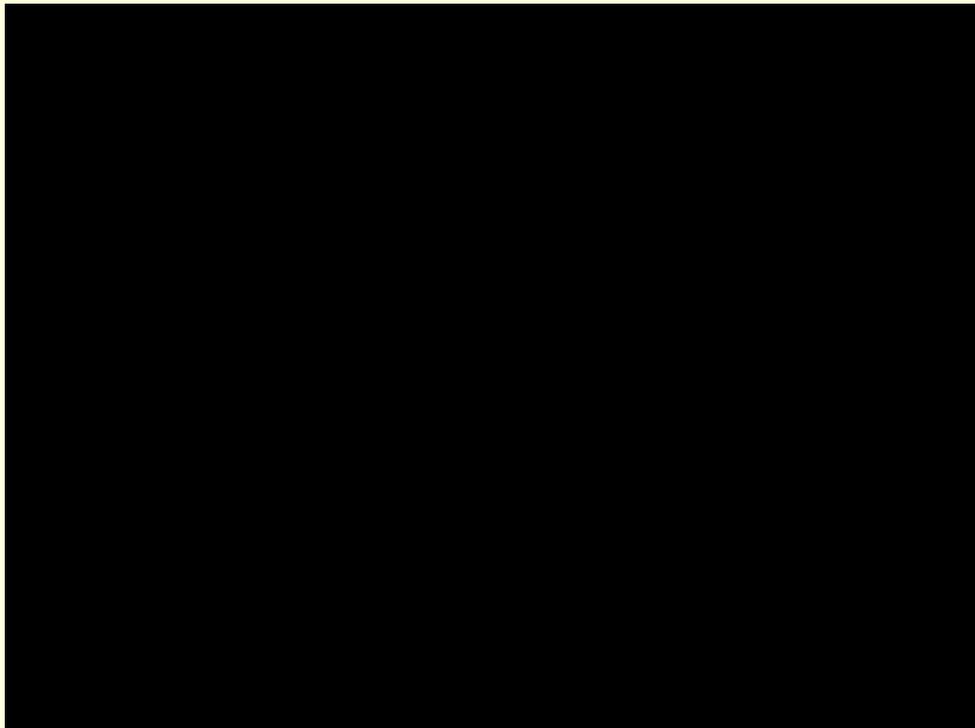
A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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Joseph Smalkowski (Copernicus) continues to be a very distinct singularity in the music universe. That's his fate, and *Worthless!* bears further witness to this after a history of unclassifiable releases that have happily found a re-publishing home in the exotic MoonJune Label while his present work on the same imprint continues into the future. You can thank Leonardo Pavkovic for that as much as The Big C himself, as Pavkovic has recognized the artfully unhinged ranteur genius for quite some time and was highly gratified to induct Copernicus into his company's catalogue. For my part, I was knocked flat when I laid an ear to the man's first LP way back in the Pleistocene Era while scribing for *Sound Choice*, *OPtion* and other national magazines. I never quite got over that initial exposure. If I'm lucky, I never will.

As with almost the entirety of Copernicus' work, each song is spontaneous in all aspects, but *Worthless!* is unusual in the canon because Smalkowski chose to isolate himself to the side of the band rather than direct and visually inspire it this time out. The result is currently generally said to be unusual and more introspective, but I take mild issue with that. Copernicus has always been a smoldering volcano, intense and moody, and his expositions have been multiplex and considered. I see little difference between Day One and now save perhaps for his recent-ish more intense transcendence into a very concentrated estate regarding exotic matters zen and other Eastern philosophies advocate: the illusion of duality, of manifestation, and of that which arises from it all. Everything here zeroes in on that.

As ever, Copernicus combines Socrates with Ikkyu with a Bukowski who gave up the hooch and found salvation in crypto-enlightenment via random text pages blowing through an alley amid chalk scrawls and graffiti. Listening to a Copernicus CD is like gazing intently at a Robert Williams painting, dimensions opening up, the contradictions of the everyday leaping out to grab the throat of any daring to look beneath the surface of our consensus reality. The near-perennial Pierce Turner sits in, as does guest Poppa Chubby, as does Sari Schorr, and 14 other musicians aside from Copernicus (who also plays keyboards), and their marvelous musical din reflects the fundamental chaos all this implies, unleashing protean elements into the environs for bypassers to wrestle with. And that, dear friends, is the real task staring directly at the listener here and in every Copernicus release.

For a glimpse of the writing/music/buzzflash process itself, as well as the interactivity required of current and potential new listeners, check this out:



...and then sit back for a moment, reflecting upon art's purpose. I contend that everything asked of it is contained in Copernicus' work, but there's also an element almost thoroughly lacking elsewhere: a socio-political-psychological factor tugging at the very foundation of consciousness. Keep in mind that any metaphysical sensei worth his salt has to trick his followers into undertaking the unnerving task of toppling the facade of so-called reality. As Nisargadatta Maharaj said, "the search for Reality is the most

dangerous of all undertakings, for it destroys the world in which you live". I couldn't agree more, but if you want a solid, entertaining, uncompromising, and often intimidating foretaste of what that means, start with **Worthless!** and then work your way backwards through the catalogue. As you do, keep in mind Copernicus' bottomline: you don't exist...not in the way you think you do, anyway.

Track List:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Quantum Mechanics | 1 You ae the Illusion that I Perceive |
| 1 You are not your Body | 1 Everlasting Freedom! |
| 1 You are the Subatomic | 1 A Hundred Trillion Years |
| 1 What is Existence? | 1 Worthless! |

All lyrics and vocals created by Copernicus, all music created by the musicians.

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