



Bio information: **DEUS EX MACHINA**

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FILE UNDER: ROCK / PROGRESSIVE / FUSION

**Fronted by Alberto Piras, one of the most Extraordinary Vocalists in all of Rock,
and Featuring Stunning Instrumentals
Italian Progressive Rock/Fusion Maestros DEUS EX MACHINA
return with *DEVOTO*,
a Musical Missile Shot Straight from the Heart
- the Band's Most Direct, Visceral Album to Date -**

Following an eight-year absence, the Italian rock/progressive group **Deus Ex Machina** bursts back onto the international scene with *Devoto*, its 8th album and first release since *Imparis*. *Imparis*, a live DVD/studio CD Cuneiform combo that included both new material and a look back at DEM's earlier discography, astonished audiences worldwide when released in 2008, garnering star ratings and prompting *All Music Guide* to call DEM "one of the most extraordinary bands in the entire music universe". Blazing into contemporary focus with *Devoto*, **Deus Ex Machina** is poised to transcend the accomplishments of its past. In *Devoto*, this phenomenal band sharpens its musical focus and expands its conceptual depth to create a release that is nuclear in its power and universal in its spiritual, emotional, and musical appeal. A spiritual thread runs through *Devoto*: the need for us, for mankind, for all humanity, to reconnect with the Earth and reaffirm our bond, our oneness, with the living planet and the cycle of life.

Devoto retains Deus Ex Machina's distinctive blend of fiery, complexly designed music, passionate *bel canto* vocals, virtuosic instrumental performances and analogue-heavy textures. Here as before, DEM's music combines both the energy and beauty of early **Mahavishnu Orchestra** and *Larks' Tongues in Aspic*-era **King Crimson**; the contrapuntal complexity of **Gentle Giant**; hints of RIO-tinged avant-prog; and the unmistakable Mediterranean vibe of fellow Ital-progsters like **PFM** and **Banco Del Mutuo Soccorso**. But just as each successive album has represented something different yet still unmistakably, unequivocally DEM, *Devoto* takes a more direct, immediate approach: a more hard-hitting, gut-punching, *visceral* Deus Ex Machina.

"After *Imparis* [the 2008 live/studio Cuneiform release], we faced a lack of energy which was, in part, due to [keyboardist] **Fabrizio Puglisi**'s departure from the band," explains Deus Ex Machina's **Alberto Piras**, one of progressive music's most original and exhilarating vocalists. "We needed to understand where we wanted to go and whether we would be capable of continuing to make DEM music. The recording of *Devoto* was quite quick, but was the result of a very long, thoughtful process. In the meantime, other members of the band had (and still have) other projects, including **Alessandro Bonetti**, who plays violin with PFM, and drummer **Claudio Trotta**, who works with many other musicians.

"Our idea was to test different ground than we had before; still being DEM, but with a more straightforward, simple musical language in the context of dense and relevant compositions," Piras continues. "This is what we think rock is about: its simplicity, but also its expressive richness. We tried to compose 'easier' songs, still full of emotion and intensity."

Indeed, *Devoto* may surprise longtime fans; guitarist **Mauro Collina** - in addition to providing his characteristically sophisticated harmonic support in conjunction with keyboardist **Luigi Ricciardiello** (returning, following a two-decade hiatus, to replace Puglisi) - delivers one of his most flat-out *rocking* solos during the funky middle section of "Autore del Futuro" ("Author of the Future"). And even as he resorts to some atypically rootsy slide acoustic and electric guitar on the appropriately titled "Quattro Piccole Mani" ("Four Small Hands") - a five-minute instrumental that, barring some spare use of **Terry Riley**-like organ and, in its final minute, a touch of bass guitar, is a layered solo feature for the guitarist - Collina's more identifiably oblique approach to his instrument remains a DEM touchstone.

What may pass for "straightforward and simple" for Deus Ex Machina is still orders of magnitude more challenging than most. The episodic "Più Ugual" ("More Equal") opens with an inimitably DEM guitar riff - metrically challenging and bolstered by Trotta's

[press release continued on verso]

thundering kit work and **Luigi Savino's** muscular bass lines - leading to an incendiary double-time vocal section where Piras soars above a mêlée of overdriven guitars and gritty Hammond organ before another solo section emerges, with Collina combining quirky chordal stops-and-starts, bluesy bends, funkified riffing and light-speed phrases. Time shifts yet again, with the group settling into one of its funkier grooves ever, providing a foundation for Ricciardiello to layer some punchy Hammond organ that ultimately reveals one of the album's most deceptive (and seemingly) non sequiturs, as everyone fades out but the keyboardist, who appears to bring the composition to a close with layers of synths slowly building to an electro-centric finish, Minimoog lines contrapuntally interweaving earlier motifs and ultimately coming to an abrupt halt. But even so, this 10-minute tour-de-force isn't over yet, as a final gong splash and a gradually slowing synth sequence finally brings the composition to its final conclusion.

"We want our fans to feel our blood flowing on this record, which is somewhat in contrast to a tradition that describes us as 'brainy and difficult,'" says Piras. "So we wrote and played our songs more from our guts than from our heads."

Written solely in Italian - an atypical contrast to previous albums, where Piras often sang **Latin** lyrics - *Devoto* is not a concept album in the traditional sense, but it does possess a spiritual thread that runs through its ten tracks, represented by the tree of life on the album's captivating cover, "...to show how man cannot feel superior to anything on this planet," Piras explains. "*Devoto* is about responsible choices and the need to reconnect our humanity to our planet. Today, more than ever, we are suffering from the effect of our detachment from the Earth; we've lost the meaning of existence, represented by a pinnacle of individualism and self-worship. With *Devoto*, we describe this uncomfortable feeling and propose solutions that originate from what has always made humans feel alive and full of meaning: the Earth and our children."

As ever, Piras and Collina were the primary songwriters, but how the songs ultimately took shape was, indeed, a group effort. "Composition has always been very easy for Mauro and I," explains Piras. "We bring the material to the band and adjust the songs together; then I write the lyrics and adapt them to the music."

Still, despite *Devoto's* more direct approach, there's plenty of compositional depth to satisfy existing Deus Ex Machina fans while appealing, with its rougher edges, to those unfamiliar with the unparalleled musical universe gradually shaped by a band now approaching its 30th anniversary. Piras and Collina may be the compositional heart of the group, but Deus Ex Machina would not be what it has evolved to be without Bonetti, whose fiery violin work pushes the propulsive title track to even greater heights. Bonetti's similarly intense but lengthier solo on the broad-scoped "**Figli**" ("**Sons**") is just one more reason why - together with some of Piras' most impassioned vocals, Collina's angular contributions, Ricciardiello and **Luigi Savino's** cinematic keyboard colors and Porreca and Trotta's maelstrom-like yet in-the-pocket rhythmic support - *Devoto* represents an evolutionary shift from past releases, but still remains unequivocally Deus Ex Machina.

A three-piece horn section graces some of *Devoto* with an unusual blend of baritone and alto saxophones, augmented by trumpet, to add heft and weight to the knotty "**Distratto Da Me**" ("**Distracted By Me**"), while the group demonstrates its ability to wax more atmospheric on the keyboard-driven miniature "**Sotterfugui**" ("**Subterfuge**"), rely entirely on acoustic instrumentation on the short "**Eterno Ritorno**" ("**Eternal Return**") and create ballads like "**Autore del Futuro**" ("**Author of the Future**") that paradoxically combine ethereal elegance with booty-shaking grooves.

Deus Ex Machina garnered critical praise from its inception in the late 1980s, when it hit the ground running by staging an ambitious rock opera. Too costly for a long run, it nevertheless led to the group's 1991 recorded debut of the opera (completed in just two days), *Gallium Caeli*. In the final decade of the 20th century, prior to signing with Cuneiform, Deus Ex Machina released three additional studio albums - 1992's *Deus Ex Machina*, 1995's *De Republica* and 1998's *Equilibrium da Insofferenza* - along with two live albums: 1996's *Diachronia Metronomiche* and 1997's vinyl-only *Non Est Ars Quae ad Effectum Casus Venit* - all on the Italian **Kaliphonia** imprint. But it was upon joining the Cuneiform roster in 2002 with the release of *Cinque* - widely considered to be amongst the group's best work - that Deus Ex Machina began to garner broader international praise. Of *Cinque*, *AllMusicGuide* writes "This remains pure Deus Ex Machina: lyrical, provoking, and genre-pushing." *Exposé* describes *Imparis* as "Driving, aggressive fusion mixed with wickedly complex rhythms, hints of RIO/avant-garde sounds, and Alberto Piras' unbelievable vocal skills," while *All About Jazz* enthuses that "what's best about *Imparis* is the opportunity to follow Deus Ex Machina from its prog-metal beginnings to the more sophisticated group it is today. Everyone in DEM is a virtuoso."

Devoto may have been a long time coming, but it's been more than worth the wait. "It took about a year-and-a-half, going very slow. We started to record with a mobile studio in a farmhouse; for ten days we set the whole valley on fire with our wall of sound," Piras says. "Then we started the mixing phase, which took quite a long time, filled with a number of setbacks...including Mauro's finger. When we'd finished recording in the farmhouse and had started cleaning up, while shaking and folding the carpets I broke Mauro's left hand finger. At first we thought it was OK, but then we saw that two phalanges were at a 90o angle...Mauro almost fainted!"

Thankfully, Collina has fully recovered and, with the release of *Devoto*, Deus Ex Machina continues to prepare even more new material while rehearsing for upcoming live dates. Prepare yourself to revel in the gripping punch and the more direct - yet still compositionally dense and intense - music of *Devoto*; like every album in its remarkable career, both a consolidation of what has come before...and a clear signpost of things to come.

For more information on Deus Ex Machina:
www.cuneiformrecords.com

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS

Digital [High-Resolution] versions of these images are available on the Deus Ex Machina artist page @ www.cuneiformrecords.com



WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT

DEUS EX MACHINA

IMPARIS

2008

CUNEIFORM RUNE 259/260

“Rooted in the jazz-rock fusion of the ‘70s, particularly the **Mahavishnu Orchestra**, Italy’s **Deus Ex Machina** deliver powerhouse tunes that are heavy on rhythm and hypnotic vamps. These serve...as launching pads for the virtuosic solos of analog synth player/organist Fabrizio Puglisi, soaring violinist Buonez Bonnetti and intense-toned guitarist Maurino Collina...as a stage from which the outstanding Alberto Piras can deliver...powerhouse vocals in... Italian and in...ancient Latin... **Piras’s charismatic performances render language barriers meaningless... Worth checking out, especially for those who miss John McLaughlin’s trippier times.**”
- Glen Hall, *Exclaim*, 17 February 2009, exclaim.ca

“**Deus Ex Machina** – quote honestly – is one of the most forceful and legitimately expressive bands on the planet. Wielding forces of nature, humanity, and electricity, this group exhibits one of the most stunning displays of musicianship that cannot be harnessed, filtered, or told what to do. Mixing early prototype jazz-rock with head banging metal and the God-like Italian vocals of Alberto Piras, they create an amalgam of sound and fury unlike any other band...Comparisons to the Mahavishnu Orchestra...**Deus Ex Machina** somehow mixes Roman or Greek renaissance with kickass bands like Queen, Kiss, or even Alice Cooper, while ever mindful of their place as an in your face, complex, brilliant, instrumental fusion band. Piras is an amazing singer, somehow able to combine the soul of a Robert Plant or a Paul Rodgers with the high pitched scream control of Slash or Geddy Lee. The difference between him and those great rock icons is that his lyric content is based on sheer poetry, not visceral or sexual songs of love...These in-concert sessions were recorded over a three-day span in Paris, with an accompanying DVD...Those...who are already fans know the unique qualities of this powerhouse group, but those who are not would be wise to pick up on this item, made by **one of the most extraordinary bands in the entire music universe...5 stars.**”

- Michael G. Nastos, *AllMusic*, allmusic.com

“This is a rock/jazz blend...**If you like the Mahavishnu Orchestra and...PFM then you’ll love this.** There is violin, organ and guitar and not too much singing – although Alberto Piras has an amazing voice...Good Stuff.” - RW, *Rock Society*, Feb/Mar 2009

“**Deus Ex Machina** are closer in sound to bands with a jazz fusion slant like Area and Arti E Mestieri, but they also have easily identifiable influences from Gentle Giant and also Italian prog greats like Banco and PFM. This excellent value for money package contains not only their long awaited sixth studio album of new material, but also a comprehensive DVD, which has a full live concert, a substantial interview (with English subtitles) and a wealth of tasty extras. The studio album...contains...lengthy instrumental sections, plenty of soloing from guitar, violin and keyboards and also each containing a vocal section featuring the remarkable pipes of Alberto Piras. Not since Demetrio Stratos has there been such a striking, powerful vocalist on the Italian progressive scene...There are no weak tracks on the CD...The Live DVD presents a full concert also recorded live in Paris, and offers a ...portrait of the group in action, with lots of detailed close-up shots of each of the band members...the band is incredibly powerful instrumentally as well as vocally...the generous helping of extras...include nearly seventeen minutes of footage from a Spanish concert from 2002 (top notch stuff), ten minutes from the USA from 1996, a short clip from Italian TV...back in 1996, and a (dated but fun) promo video from 1993. All in all **this is a great package for fans of the band, and its career-encompassing nature makes it a good introduction to the band for newbies...8 out of 10 stars.**”
- Dave Sissons, *DPRP*, 2009, dprp.net

“**Deus Ex Machina**...are considered elder statesmen in the world of progressive rock. But don’t let the ‘elder’ fool you, there is a ton of fire still burning these 5 tracks...the package also includes a second DVD disc of the band performing live in 2006 along with in-depth band interviews and all kinds of extras. This is a stellar pack for fans of **Deus Ex Machina**...**Deus Ex Machina** embodies the classic Italian prog style with more than a little Rock In Opposition-inspired jazz-fusion... Each song also finds space for Alberto Piras’ expressive vocals, but this is more than anything instrumental prog. The vocals are inspiring and well placed taking centre stage while being sung, but they never dominate the composition. The music ebbs and flows in intensity...letting the music breathe...violin work of Buonez Bonetti is quite prevalent...plays off either Maurino Collina’s guitars or Fabrizio Puglisi’s keyboards. The three...are prone to working themselves into a musical frenzy...there isn’t a bad track on *Imparis*, and with so much going on in each track there is lots of music to absorb. As a two disc package, *Imparis* is first rate...extra bonus of the DVD is a winner. **Deus Ex Machina’s music is very complex and so being able to watch them perform it is breathtaking. That and the 22-minute interview, video clips from 1993, other live performances from 1996 and 2002 make *Imparis* a must have package.**”

- Jerry Lucky, *The Progressive Rock Files*, 2009, jerrylucky.com

“They are pretty incredible. They combine fusion with RIO and Crimsonian progressive rock (and even some jam band and funk sounds) to create a musical tapestry that’s impressive and fairly unique. Then incredible vocals...complete the picture...The DVD includes a full concert – and it’s a scorching show...either on of these products – the CD or the DVD – by itself would be a great thing to have. Combining them in one package, though, makes this an exceptional value. If you are a fan...you...will be all over this. If you, like me, had never heard them before, it makes for a great introduction.”

- Gary Hill, *Music Street Journal* www.musicstreetjournal.com

“Newcomers to Deus Ex Machina will be introduced to one of the most beautiful voices in all of rock...*Imparis* finds Alberto Piras in fine form, his supple and pitch-perfect pipes delivering Latin and Italian lyrics. He’s the ideal complement to Deus Ex Machina’s adventurous combination of RIO, rock and jazz music transcending language barriers. The album’s finest piece...‘Cor Mio’...its delicate balance of piano, acoustic guitar and violin captures the band’s essence...This two-disc set includes a CD of studio material and an intimate live DVD – both recorded in 2006 at a world-class nightclub on the outskirts of Paris...Sound: 3.5/4, Composition: 3.5/4, Musicianship: 4/4, Performance: 4/4, Total Rating: 15/16.**”**

- Michael Popke, *Progression*

“DEUS EX MACHINA...is internationally recognized as a cult band, if not a living legend...the DVD consists of three sections...The picture is excellent; the sound is crisp, allowing the listener to hear all instruments clearly. But it’s the band’s concert itself that, so to speak, crowns all those qualities, and is the most impressive impromptu live performance I have watched in years. The musicians stretch out from the outset...deep and turbulent musical waters... Alberto Piras...just works wonders with his voice...appearing as a totally unique, on-of-a-kind singer, no matter that he is not the first to...impart a strong operatic sense... The band’s older creations...are noticeably heavier in sound...Prog-Metal... Only one of the two items that form the ‘Interviews’ segment is really an interview: the band does it in Italian, but it’s accompanied with English subtitles...The ‘Extras’ include: Paris backstage, a set of excerpts: from Manresa (Spain, 2002), from Chapel Hill (USA, 1996) and from Italian TV (1996), and *Ad Montem*, a video clip shot in 1993...the DVD is an excellent or rather essential addition to the CD... ‘Imparis’ portrays its creators as one of those few genuinely inventive and inspired modern groups that revive the classic spirit of international Progressive Rock and which, instead of borrowing wholesale from their ancestors, as most neo bands do, use only some of their ideas...proving that our beloved music is still alive. Without such releases as this one (Top-20-2008), in these days of clowns, clones and wannabes we, true connoisseurs of the genre, would more and more often feel like we’re fishing in a bog. 6 Stars.”

- Vitaly Menshikov, *Progressor*, 1 March 2009, www.progressor.net

“This band plays it’s own unique style of progressive jazz rock and fusion with some avant-garde thrown into the mix...I hear some King Crimson in places, a little bit of classic rock, maybe even a hint of Steely Dan...in the way they use the electric piano...However, they do not really sound like any of those bands, and that is what makes them unique. And hey, any band that sings in Latin surely must be one of a kind...these musicians are all virtuosos on their respective instruments...Each member contributes to the band’s sound... The music...is extremely intricate, whether it’s the sound of an electric guitar adding punch...or the violin creating layer upon layer of instrumental bliss. ...Deus Ex Machina have released a winner here and I look forward to more of their work. If you are into jazz rock and fusion and appreciate outstanding musicianship this should be an auto-purchase.”

- Jon Neudorf, *Sea of Tranquility*, 26 February 2009, seaoftranquility.org

DEUS EX MACHINA

CINQUE

2002

CUNEIFORM RUNE 159

“This powerful Italian band...have gained quite a reputation in progressive rock circles for their challenging and adventurous brand of musical composition. Their reputation hit the mainstream prog circles in 1995 with the release...*De Republica*, which was followed with a hugely successful live appearance at Progfest 95. With this new offering, *Cinque* they pick up where they left off and throw in a quite a few new tasty licks.

... All the “sound-marks” are here, unusual starts and stops, tricky tempo changes, lots of cascading minor notes or chord structures all framed with the ever present violin and outstanding vocal work of Alberto Piras. By my ear these songs rock a lot harder than their previous efforts. ...they start to cook with some infectious and intense rhythms. In fact INTENSE is a word that could describe the material...

... The compositions are layered with hints of jazz, RIO, jazz-fusion and of course progressive rock. Their music has...a strong jazz influence... there’s the really psychedelic-blues guitar intro of cut-three which then evolves into some moving solos from the violin and electric piano. Things really mellow out on cut-four... Cut-eight is essentially a chamber orchestra featuring bass and multi-tracked strings...

Deus Ex Machina give us a lot of great music to absorb on *Cinque*. If you are new to the band make a point of listening to this new CD a number of times with open ears, only then...will you fully come to appreciate the depth of music offered by Deus Ex Machina. It worked for me. For those of you who are fans, don’t hesitate to pick up this latest offering. Not only does it touch the extremes of progressive music, it rocks-out as well. ... *Cinque* is destined to be one of the top albums of the year.”

-Jerry Lucky, *Ghostland*, August 28, 2002, ghostland.com

“...Italian prog...offers you such a huge collection of atmospheres and melodies. ... The nicest thing is when the music becomes pollinated with melody and complexity all at the same time. It gets even more interesting when an authentic violin is added. And it becomes an all-time high when a prog equivalent of the world famous Pavarotti is introduced, an incredible talent, who to make things even more interesting, sings in Latin! ...the American Cuneiform label can count itself lucky to have scored this incredible fifth CD

by Deus Ex Machina. On *Cinque*, it's as if the band relives the seventies, although their result is more daring, more adventurous. The tension is created by putting electric and acoustic guitars back to back whilst beautiful violin sounds bring back memories of the pure Italian school as well as reminding us of both Kansas and Jean-Luc Ponty. ...top all of this with the incredible vocal skills of Roberto Piras...

Another important element in the music of Deus Ex Machina has to be the authentic sound of the Hammond organ. In "Rhinoceros" this Hammond is played in a percussive way whereby the result sounds a little like an alternative, progressive Santana! Magrino Collina's guitar can sound crystal clear, intimate, and extremely loud, as well as bluesy... Soundwise Collina's acoustic guitar can be found in between that of Juan Babiloni and Chris Whitley. It's all these extremely varied sounds which...delivers the label Deus Ex Machina. ... Enjoy the daring, the talented, the complex. And for once do enjoy without limits!"

–John "Bo Bo" Bollenberg, *Progressive World*, August 2004, www.progressiveworld.net

"They are capable of playing so many different ways in so many different styles. They can be over-the-top powerful, understated and subtle, orchestrated and epic... *Cinque* sounds like much more of a finesse effort overall than a brawl, but songs like "Rhinoceros" show that Deus Ex Machina can rock with the best. That song definitely ranks up there as one of their classics. ... Guitarist Maurino Collina, keyboardist Fabrizio Puglisi, and vocalist extraordinaire Alberto Piras are the featured musicians, but the rest of the group shines as well. There are no weak links in this band. ... After 12 years on the scene, Deus Ex Machina still has a unique sound that continues to develop and grow. ...*Cinque* is absolutely worth having."

–Mike Grimes, *Exposé*, August 2002, #25

"... The band plays this typical Italian mixture of prog rock, jazz rock and fusion, in the tradition of bands like P.F.M. and Banco. ...the music...focuses on instrumental improvisations. ...

Deus Ex Machina's music sounds very improvised, but fresh and very much alive. It's never too polished, and quite energetic, sometimes even raw. I particularly liked the "natural sound" of the instruments, which works out very well for this kind of music.keyboards are the main instruments. It's mostly organ...and Fabrizio Puglisi plays them in a nice aggressive way, often pumping out power chords. His playing sometimes reminded me of a jazzy Keith Emerson (ELP), and when he plays synths, he gives them a jazzy Patrick Moraz treatment.

The guitars are played by Maurino Collina. Don't expect the usual melodious prog rock stuff here, as his playing is very jazz rock oriented: mean and dirty, a bit like Jan Akkerman (Focus) or Peter Banks (early Yes). ...Claudio Trotta's drum...playing is a good example of how well jazz and adventurous prog rock go together, and his "buzy jazz swing" sometimes reminded me of the early King Crimson.

Alberto Piras' voice is high, dramatical and powerful, and in fact not unlike Damian Wilson. He sings in Italian and Latin...

... this album is a great mixture of complex, improvised jazz- influenced prog rock. ...I found the final result quite "rocking" and with enough prog relevance. The musicianship and pure energy of the album are great. Stylistically, I'd say the music comes closest to P.F.M., Banco and Focus. To a lesser degree, also Gentle Giant and King Crimson... 7 out of 10."

–Rob Michel, *The Dutch Progressive Rock Page*, 2002, V. 34, www.dprp.net

"If I would have to give the main reference for this band, then it would be King Crimson. Not that they are copycats or even out to copy this band, but on the level of intensity and approach to music that come quite close. Their are plenty of differences too...they add violin and plenty of acoustics for lightness (but with a twist), their expressive vocalist is like Stratos of Area (but less extreme), they harbour quite a bit of slide guitar and plaintive violin, and their approach also has a definite jazzy/meandering almost jamming feel at times. In addition, the keyboardist makes good use of his organ injecting a Gentle Giant and ELP influence here and there. ...Deus Ex Machina is a thoroughly original unit, the listening of which comes close to an adventure."

–Jurriaan Hage, *Axiom of Choice*, December 2002, people.cs.uu.nl/jur/progrock.html

"Deus Ex Machina's complex brand of jazzy/classical prog is both nimble and dense in its artistry, making for what would be an excellent fusion of Italian 70's and Canterbury styles, notably with some Baroque Gentle Giant cum Dead Can Dance edges. The Mixture is unique..."

–Alan Freeman, *Audion*, Summer 2003, #48

"Deus Ex Machina...doesn't fall under the regular trappings of an endless amount of noodling bands drowning in "sameness." ...they create a rhythm that is constantly in a state of evolution, allowing the space between notes to breathe and swell, almost making this a double album. While there might be the odd tinge of earlier Genesis and Yes, they are far more realistically theatrical, with a dash of Dante and a touch of Bosch."

–Roman Sokal, *Exclaim!*, September 2002, www.exclaim.ca

"...Deus Ex Machina...are one seriously unique unit. Forget about the fact that the heady vocals of Alberto Piras are almost completely in Latin, but rather concentrate on how this Italian sextet is far from sounding anything at all like...its national peers, leaving behind any notions of sweet lyricism and opting instead for a highly energetic, visceral, and...well...Deus Ex Machina certainly puts the rock back in Italian progressive rock.

...the music contained on *Cinque* is simultaneously vibrant and eloquent, with acoustic passages that for sake of comparison come across as an almost brainy *Led Zeppelin III* and electrifyingly intense moments during which Piras threatens to take over the world with the help of his fellow mercenaries. It is a continuous flux of musical emotions and ideas that never depart too much from the basic line but yet span quite a large spectrum that contains the mysterious, the neurotic, the innocent, the rocking, the energetic, and all in one convenient package... There is the wonderfully intelligent, dexterous, and spontaneous guitar phrasing of Mauricio Collina, the hyperkinetic drumming identity of Claudio Trotta, and other assorted goodies... ..when Deus Ex Machina becomes intent on taking over, it definitely does just that.. the perfectly natural and organic construction of "Convolutus" or the sheer unforgettable energy witnessed on "Il Pensiero Che Porta Alle Cose Importanti," ...

... With Piras' wonderfully dynamic vocals and the intricate wall of sound that his cohorts develop and constantly mutate via a healthy mix of seventies principle with modern energy and conviction, one could hardly maintain that this Italian act isn't right on the money with its general approach, because it is. ... Rating: 3.5/5"

– Marcelo Silveyra, *Progressive World*, August 2002, www.progressiveworld.net

"Deus Ex Machina's first international release, *Cinque*, is probably the closest release in spirit to classic progressive rock I have heard yet by Cuneiform, as it relies on the impressive legacy of the 70's Italian progressive scene... the forefront is dominated by a deliberate, melodramatic, operatic vocal performance paying homage to Demetrio Stratos, the eccentric voice of one of Italy's most creative outfits, Area...

...Deus Ex Machina blurs the borders between neighboring genres (progressive rock, jazz rock and even hard rock), relating its music with its poetry in denunciation of definitions... there's definitely a benefit in the English translation of the Latin sung text...in the accompanying booklet...

...Deus Ex Machina's members...masterfully tailor previously made musical fabrics to their own measures, resulting in an impressively executed,...album, which manifests both experience and enthusiasm. (8/10)"

–Avi Shaked, *Maelstrom*, Issue 32, www.maelstrom.nu

"This is probably the most accessible and pleasant Deus Ex Machina release to date. If I were to showcase this band's talents to a new listener, this would be my best bet. Every once in a while they drop a riff so catchy...one of those riffs that was written within nanoseconds of the big bang, and has just taken this long to collide with Earth. That phenomenon has struck me with their previous work, but this CD seems to have them channeling more of this universal musical genius than before. *Cinque* was exactly what I was asking for after hearing their previous release, *Equilibrismo da insofferenza*; it has more high points, and less repetition. ... Stratos' freakish dynamism isn't matched here by a long shot, and the extent to which Piras sounds exactly like *some* of Stratos' better known range, he does it *very* well. I can't imagine the guy trying to tone it down or limit the range. ...

Cinque focuses on quite a few different elements of Deus Ex Machina's persona. There's the catchiness factor...an overall change in arrangement as well. Instead of the occasional horns, we get a song focusing almost entirely on strings. The added cello, viola and violin add a somber touch...

I was completely astounded by this CD when I first got it, and even now must say its extraordinarily good. The instrumentalism is impeccable, the songwriting has matured greatly and each musician seems more attuned to one another, as well as themselves. ...this release will certainly stand the test of time and should appeal to those who desire action, force and vitality in an album."

–Gary Niederhoff, *Ground and Sky*, April 15, 2003, www.progreviews.com

"There are already five albums in the history of one [of] the most representative Italian modern progressive rock bands. Besides, they feature some ingredients in their music that turns it extremely original. ...[Deus Ex Machina] are masters in composition and performance of a Jazz-drenched Rock, with polished edges and...astonishing rhythmic puzzles. Beyond the musical excellence there are some other factors that attain a special charism. Alberto Piras' voice is considered as one of the most spectacular in Progressive Rock and the fact of singing in Latin creates a strange melodic delicacy in the music. ...the development of each track has a small writing (maybe a poem) as basis which gives enough food for thought. The Latin adds...a mythical emphasis. ...DxM continue their career at its best...And...the music is getting a healthy evolution... 7.5/10."

–Spulit, *Progressive Rock Portugal*, September 30, 2002, www.prog-pt.com

"*Deus Ex Machina* is one of the best bands of these last ten years and a band that has contributed essentially to keep very high the artistic level of the modern prog-rock. ...it's a group that has pushed and that has given some precious prestige to the modern italian prog-rock school, but with the drawback of not being understood by the simple prog-rock listener because of its complicated musical philosophy. ...Something similar to *Anglagard* or *Landberk's* case in northern Europe. ...this supreme band is...carrying out even more talented work than ever... A work that follows all the italian band's rules and that goes further with some superb rhythm experimentation...and great vocal work by *Mr.Piras*... they match harmonic ideas like RIO or Jazz, defining a kind of music that moves inside a vanguard dream world. "*Cinque*" is one of the best records that *DEM* has ever conceived. ... "*De Republica*" was a great album that surprised a lot the public and made people get to know them... In this fifth album the italian band have achieved to put together all their talent in a shorter course letting the music flow naturally. ... eight songs that somehow prove once more that they are some kind of masters that generate some master music. A work that has to be tasted and consumed... There are a lot of sensations enclosed... You have everything here. You have progressive rock, soul, funky, RIO, jazz, classical music, whatever you want. ... For the people that don't know them please get your mind fed with this master piece. 4/5 stars"

–Jordi Costa, *ProgVisions*, September 2002, www.progvissions.net