



COMMUNICATIONS

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Phil Manzanera

★★★

Diamond Head

EXPRESSION

Roxy guitarist's 1975 solo outing reissued alongside *Mainstream* by his band Quiet Sun.



Phil Manzanera was an unlikely glam hero.

Possessed of none of the stage presence and disruptive power exhibited by many of his contemporaries, Manzanera looked – and sounded – a bit tame. Drawing on a love of Latino and prog, he forged, instead, a quietly impressive body of work which all started here with his first solo album, recorded in 1975 when Ferry decided to discard Roxy for a solo career. At its best, such as on the haunting title track, the Robert Wyatt-larynxed *Frontera*, and the Eno-sung *Miss Shapiro*, this is as good as anything mid-period Roxy were imagining. But elsewhere, it sounds old – poor singing, noodling musodrom, and the sort of long-haired complications Roxy were supposed to have done away with back in their glam heyday. Still, if you are looking for a snapshot of British art-rock of the time, this is it.

David Buckley