Tangerine Dream – The Angel From The West Window (2011)



01 - The Mysterious Gift to Mankind 02 - The Evening Before Easter play *03 - Living in Eternity* play *04 - The Silver Boots of Bartlett Green 05 - Hosanna of the Damned 06 - Dream Phanton of the Common Man 07 - The Strange Idol of Baphomet 08 - Hoel Dhat the Alchemist 09 - The Invisible Seal of the Holy Tribe*

- Edgar Froese - performer (1-3,5,6,8) - Thorsten Quaeschning - performer (4,7,9) + - Hoshiko Yamane - electric violin (1,3,9)

It seems to this writer that Edgar Froese has decided to renew his inspiration for demanding electronic music by returning to more challenging soundscapes with the release in 2011 of a couple of astonishing albums, part of what he calls "the Eastgate's Sonic Poem Series". After decades of continuous releases, Tangerine Dream has finally resolved itself to return to what it does best: orchestral electronic music with powerful rhythmic movement and seamless instrumentation including visceral soloing. Surely, one has to admit that there were some stuff that just did not meet the "progressive rock" label at all, veering too close to New Age preachiness and mellow pillow music. Their once legendary citrus tang somehow became bland and flavorless, with maudlin albums such as most of the 90s productions (with a few exceptions such as the delightful Dream Mixes series). Many long-time fans have despaired at the artistic fizzle of a once stupendous band of sonic pioneers. Well, I am pleased to say that they are back in the saddle again!

The Eastgate series are "non-verbal musical translations" of celebrated authors like Edgar Allan Poe and German writer Gustav Meyrink. All the recordings were done in Vienna, a city that has a somewhat legendary musical history, to say the least! On "The Angel of the West Window" the casual listener is immediately reminded that the once-fabled TDream sound is back to the forefront, with pulsating sequencers, massive synthesized cascades and intense electric guitar soloing from the master himself. Inspired by Austrian author Meyrink's work, Froese and company (the amazing Thorsten Quaeschning) flourish with shimmering fire by combining deep

rhythmic foundations, using real drums with celestial ripples of electronics. It's edgy, nervous, almost eerie, showcasing a psychotic sheen that was sorely missing for so many years. Slithering electric violin also adorns the tracks where needed and the vibrancy is evident when the synthetic meets the organic. Therein lies the clues to their musical renaissance. The metallic sheen is back and the sonic density has returned, all under the spell of sensitive melodies that emote deeply like the forlorn piano melody on the magnificent "The Idol of Baphomet" as well as the spooky synthesized veil on the opening track "The Mysterious Gift to Mankind". The latter's main exalted theme is elevated by some surly guitar soloing that will please progfans to no end. The achingly beautiful melody on "Living in Eternity" is pure heaven, classical music of the very highest order, something Mozart, Shubert, Liszt and co would revel in.

Truth is the entire album is sparkling material, loaded with inspired playing, crafty musical designs that reject any simplistic formula, and in accordance with their true vocation, ideal soundtrack music for some imaginary movie or novel. Tangerine Dream has been a perennial favorite as sonic backdrop for all of my home parties as well as perfect restaurant audio décor. Some of their work is ideally suited for long car drives into scenic landscapes, a beguiling universe of towering mountains, torrential rivers and reflective lakes. ---tszirmay, progarchives.com

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