

Erland Dahlen - Clocks (2017)

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1 Clocks 7:50 2 Glas 4:13 3 Ship 7:41 4 Bear 7:46 5 Lizard 4:24 6 Wood 7:07
Erland Dahlen - Drums [WFL Drums From The 30s], Cymbal [Cymbells], Bells [Blossom Bells], Bells [Hand Bells], Saw [Musical Saw], Xylophone, Slit Drum [Log Drum], Gong [Gongs], Percussion [Marbles On Metal Plates], Frame Drum, Steel Drums [Steeldrum], Tom Tom [Marching Tom], Performer [Knives And Forks], Electronics, Drum Machine [Drum Machines], Musical Box [Droneboxes], Vocals [Vocal], Mellotron, Keyboards [Keys], Guitar [Guitars], Performer [Sticks/Mallets/Bow On String Instruments]

Erland Dahlen's 'Clocks' presents the listener with a series of epic cinematic soundscapes. Although there is no actual film to illustrate, the imaginative power and suggestive resonance of Dahlen's compositions easily stand comparison with the work of leading film composers. As Dahlen – whose previous album, 'Blossom Bells', was nominated for a Spellemannspris, the Norwegian 'Grammy' – is a drummer, one might first think of Antonio Sanchez's percussive score for 'Birdman', say, but 'Clocks' employs such a broad range of sound-sources and musical reference-points that it's probably closer to the atmospheric film-work of Tangerine Dream or Ryuichi Sakamoto. Police drummer Stewart Copeland's music for 'Rumblefish' and the contributions to 'Apocalypse Now' by the Grateful Dead's Mickey Hart and Bill Kreutzmann come to mind, too.

Rock and post-rock references are relevant, for Dahlen appears completely unapologetic about adding an echo-laden Eighties drum-thump, or a buzz-saw industrial guitar-drone alongside the avant-garde found-sounds one might associate with Harry Partch hub-caps, gongs or bells. In 'Clocks', what could be regarded as the usual drummer's strategy of layering one percussive source on top of another is superseded by a complex structural amalgam of melody and rhythm where the textural detail becomes so dense that it's impossible to tell where one leaves off and the other begins. The result is a collection of moodily anthemic, often dark-hued pieces that in a noirish thriller might be used to accompany a hit or a heist. As stand-alone music, they function perfectly as edgily ambient soundscapes with an epic widescreen feel.

The range of instruments Dahlen employs is also a world away from the usual percussionist's standbys. Here, the ethereal, eerie sound of a musical saw or a Mellotron, or a wailing wordless vocal, provides the fragile melodic figure to set against a thick, rhythmic ground provided by a palimpsest of vintage drum-sounds, their scuffed acoustic patina further distressed by electronic processing. Indeed, Dahlen's list of instruments for the album includes, as well as antique drums from the 1930s, various gongs, xylophones, bells, bowed instruments and strings as well as drone-boxes and electronics, plus the workaday sounds of knives and forks or marbles rolling on a plate. "Before I went into the studio to make this album I bought some Cymbells, a Mellotron, several large sheets of metal and a variety of drum machines and stringed instruments", Dahlen recalls with enthusiasm, like a chef talking about assembling ingredients for the preparation of that evening's menu. "It's incredibly inspiring to explore new instruments and find new sounds."

The variety of Dahlen's sound-making sources is paralleled by the vast range of his musical experience with different bands and projects. His discography runs to over 300 albums, plus live work with leading Norwegian artists such as Xploding Plastix, Nils Petter Molvaer, Stian Westerhus, Eivind Aarset, Hannah Hukkelberg and Anja Garbarek, together with guest appearances with John-Paul Jones and Mike Patton, among many others. He was also the drummer with the band Madrugada for a number of years. His ex-colleagues in Xploding Plastix have roles to play in 'Clocks': Jens Petter Nilsen mixed the album, and Hallvard W. Hagen remixed the track 'Lizard'.

As well as writing and performing everything on 'Clocks' himself, Erland Dahlen also acted as the album's producer. The recording was mastered by Helge Sten at Audio Virus Lab.

---hubromusic.com

Po dwuletniej przerwie norweski perkusista Erland Dahlen wraca z trzecim solowym albumem „Clocks”. Warto wspomnieć, że za poprzedni krążek „Blossom Bells” (recenzja) Dahlen został nominowany do Spellemannspris (norweskiej Grammy).

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Norweg znany jest także z kolekcjonowania oraz konstruowania rozmaitych instrumentów. Dahlen przed wejściem do studia i nagraniem nowych kompozycji, zaopatrzył się w różne dzwonki, mellotrony, automaty perkusyjne oraz inne instrumenty. Jego imponujący i nieoczywisty styl gry na perkusji (łączy technikę z ogromną wrażliwością i dbałością o brzmienie) możemy ponownie podziwiać na „Clocks”. Erland porusza się między ambientem, krautrockiem, IDM-em, post-rockiem a new wave’em, zamieniając hasłowe myślenie o muzyce w coś znacznie większego. Myślę, że zgodzicie się ze mną co do filmowego nastroju „Clocks”, o czym świadczy zamykający całość „Wood”.

W bardzo ciekawy sposób zostały wykorzystane także fale thereminu, chyba najlepiej to słyszeć w wyśmienitym „Bear”. Z kolei w „Glas” mamy niesamowicie powyginaną rytmikę perkusji okraszona elektroniką (skojarzenia z The Necks i Radian są na miejscu) i post-rockowo-ambientową gitarą na drugim planie. Świetne nagranie! Jest też niezwyklej urody remiks utworu „Lizard” autorstwa Hallvarda W. Hagera (m.in. z Xploding Plastix, Kvist).

Podójście Erlanda Dahlena do perkusji jest fantazyjne, a zarazem niesamowicie precyzyjne. Co ważne, poziom skomplikowania niektórych partii nie przechodzi w typowy pokaz mocy. Jest w tym wszystkim równowaga i ogromna dojrzałość. „Clocks” to album, którego nie wolno przegapić! ---nowamuzyka.pl

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