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CD Feature/ Aaron Spectre: "Lost Tracks"

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Beauty is no clear-cut thing at all: A sense of longing lingering in spacey robotic electronica.

Some will not be able to fathom how Aaron Spectre could come up with an album like "Lost Tracks". Didn't this man just unleash "Grist", a brutal Metal-onslaught under his alter ego Drumcorps, which took no prisoners and forced sampled power chord riffs into bloody one-on-one's with mangled electronics? Only two months later, he is back with a work of sweetness, optimism and hundreds of melodies from a place where there is always music in the air. This contradiction, however, is easy to dispel.

For whatever your mama might have told you, all true metal fans are romantics in their heart of hearts and believe in eternal values in art and life alike. So does Spectre. One of his principles seems to be that energy

needs to be released in some form or the other. It can either manifest itself as channeled aggression (as with Drumcorps) or as tenderness and love (such with his solo output). Don't be afraid, therefore, that this album opens with a soft meditation on the dulcimer and ends with a dreamy duet of his acoustic guitar and Japanese singer Kazumi's lyrical vocals – after all, there is enough of Spectre's second personality in what lies between to make this a well-balanced affair and even the most yearning motive is either embedded in razorsharp, stumbling and stuttering grooves or distorted to the point of mutilation. Beauty, Spectre seems to suggest, is no clear-cut thing at all and strangely enough manifests itself most clearly at places where we'd least expect it. Almost none of the "lost tracks" is therefore as carefree as the joyous remix of Aarktica's "Ocean". In the rumbling and hooting HipHop exercise "Down in the Gutter" or the corridors of Drones, Dub and Reverb of "Lapsed", there are even ominous clouds hanging over Spectre's themes. There is always a sense of longing and unfulfillment lingering in the spacey robotic electronica, which keeps one's attention focussed - you never know whether all of the happiness was just an illusion.

Which only goes to strenghten the impression of Spectre as a man with a romantic inclination. If you think about it, there were similar moments with Drumcorps as well, when the guitar madness and the percussion frenzy stopped and made way for short atmospheric interludes, which took listeners out of time and away from a one-sided perspective. It is not such a long way from "Grist" to "Lost Tracks" as some may think.

By Tobias Fischer

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