

KREIDLER – SPELLS AND DAUBS

In a year of the moon, **Kreidler** have produced the album **SPELLS AND DAUBS**. In a year of the moon - and in a year with 13 moons. Such years are known for not being the most comfortable.

In September 2020 the band met for exploratory sessions and initial recordings in Düsseldorf, in the familiar settings of the Kabawil Theater. That already has a certain tradition. The impetus this time was a solitary gig in the conspicuously spacious surroundings of the (former) Philipshalle. In a year that threw everyone back on themselves.

Over the winter **Kreidler** worked remotely, sifting through the material, arranging the pieces, adding textures and contours. They met again in the spring of 2021 for further recordings at the Uhrwerk Orange studio in Hilden, near Düsseldorf. That, too, has a certain tradition.

From fifteen pieces they filtered out ten, and thus held an album in their hands. Then - and this is new - they took it to London, to **Peter Walsh**, so that he could mix the tracks.

SPELLS AND DAUBS

Daubs are in no doubt here. This is a tenfold of colourful-blotches-thrown-onto-canvas. Then a stepping back, contemplating, remixing paint, layering, overlaying, scraping free again elsewhere. And these spells are not devastating curses, rather they are enchanting incantations, a calling forth a spring without having to ban winter in a somber masks. **SPELLS AND DAUBS** is a melodious interplay. Not that Kreidler neglect the rhythmic; their characteristic drive runs through all the pieces on **SPELLS AND DAUBS**. Perhaps it's like this: The beat is musicalised, the melody rhythmised.

SPELLS AND DAUBS is like a collection of short stories. Its ten pieces explore the same space drawn together by an overlaying arc. All of them have the length of a single, and each one has the *potential* of a single in the way the arrangements are laid out - so enticing is the melodic line and the beat. This succinctness was perhaps last heard on the 2000 eponymous Kreidler album.

The drums are powerful with a light swing. The bass alternates beyond its functionality and its indicator just of the low frequency, swoops up and takes over the melodic lead. Perhaps most beautiful in the irresistible pop gems **Arena**, **Unframed Drawings**, and **Revery**. Aptly Alex Paulick commenced to the fretless Bass - conjuring the spirit of Mick Karn.

Tantrum opens the album, it's a quick fit, nothing too violent, more a play with throwing things at. Sway your hips. To mark a mark. Beat it down on a typewriter, roll the toms. Angelic upstairs singing.

Toys I Never Sell takes it down a notch, a poetic exploration of the room. Demonstrative cymbals and a bass line suggesting dub meet strange animals from outer space. **Dirty Laundry** depicts an empty city with fading footsteps, though not aimless, a sort of a cold wave funk, a certain eeriness, a brief threat like an espionage story: the hi-hat knows more than it wants to reveal! The field recordings tie in into **Freundchen** and **Music Follows Suit**. In the former once more a saxophone expands the **Kreidler** sound palette, leading us out of the city into a meadow of sharp cutting grass, glistening sun, better keep your boots on. In the latter, a band of thirds blows-by, a magic snap of your fingers like a staple gun tries to hold it in place, a bass steps in, the drums does pirouettes. A puzzle dissolves, and the ribbon hovers up into a dazzling play of clouds.

In **Revery** a synth sequence chases forward, with an enchanted melody on co-driver's seat. The rhythm section in no hurry goes for the half time. One of the most enticing songs on the album, this feels already like a classic. **Unframed Drawings** breezes a somewhat bluer note, think of layered memories, slightly blurred, faded, ushering back and forth looking for a new formation, a new narration, a fresh start, combining longing with comfort. In **Arise Above**, **Tantrum's** secret cousin, a soaring synthesiser starts the drum beat, the bass kicks in, and the rhythmic framework is ensnared by a netting of insidious melodies. The ha-ha-ha of a synthetic voice accompanies us through a song, which ends in an Eve Future like theme on the piano.

Arena is a melancholic urge, the song runs into a delay, its theme turns over, tumbles, falls into itself, finding itself in itself, and takes itself up again. **Greetings from Dave** starts with the telephone call, a postcard from Paris, Then the snare surges ahead, and a recorder-like, and a bagpipe-like push the boat out, for a celebration in the final grooves of the album, big fuss, turn the record over!

For all of the Krautrock attributions, **Kreidler** never tires of mentioning that their musical socialisation came along British pop music. So you might say the co-op with **Peter Walsh** is a match made in heaven. His illustrious mixing and production skills have lifted works from Shalamar or Lynx to Heaven 17 to Scott Walker, Pulp or FKA Twigs into other spheres. **Kreidler** had previously collaborated with him in 2013 for two tracks (Snowblind, Escaped, BB169). On **SPELLS AND DAUBS**, **Walsh's** methods and magic are especially audible in the spatial production, with his hallmark blend of depth and punch.

A limited edition vinyl release includes a collaboration with **Eric D. Clark** on a bonus EP. Grown up in California, **Eric D. Clark** is a classically trained pianist who moved from gospel to punk to electronica to disco to house - backwards and forwards. Well known as member of Whirlpool Productions, Clark is also a renowned solo artist, producer, and DJ. He has collaborated with artists like Mandel Turner, Army of Lovers, Angie Reed, Mouse on Mars, Chaka Khan, or TLC. The friendship between him and the band goes back three decades. High time for a collab! His inimitable voice and phrasing lifts **Howling at the Third Moon** up into a gospel like pop experience. A contender for the top-ten of a different world. And, yes, Howling at in a year of the moon.

SPELLS AND DAUBS is wrapped up in an enigmatic black-and-white drawing by prolific artist and filmmaker **Heinz Emigholz** from his Basis of Make-Up series (more on pym.de). Their ongoing collaboration feels like a constant now. The mutual interference of **Heinz Emigholz's** and **Kreidler's** universes started about ten years ago, when he expanded the album DEN (BB115) with seven videos.

(V. Luxemburgo)