



LISTENING NOTES

Qua

Painting Monsters on Clouds

(Surgery)

INTRODUCTION

My main focus and my main passion has been arrangements, I like complex arrangements in music; I love it, that's why I listen to Burt Bacharach and things like that. I'm not a fan of model-based music. I find a lot of electronic music is based around that, and that's fine. I just can't connect to it. I like key changes. It's almost like it's bad to do key changes in electronic music these days.'

Qua - as interviewed in Cyclic Defrost Issue 6

Qua's second album is a delight of texture, colour and movement. Across the 11 tracks Qua displays a penchant for aching melodies and the ability to evocatively create a scene utilising, in many cases, snippets of sound that taken by themselves would be mere abstractions. A session guitarist as a youngster and still an avowed fan of Yes his background in technicality and virtousity is stunningly apparent, and suprisingly is not a hindrance to the gorgeously organic and human textures that he's able to achieve. *Painting Monsters on Clouds* is, if anything more akin to a series of Post-Impressionist Georges Seurat paintings in the way they capture subtleties in their seemingly abstract conglomeration of dots - a task broader brush strokes would fail to capture. And like the famous Pointillist painter it's only when one takes a few steps away from the canvas that the scene is revealed to be more than a collection of tiny snips and snaps.

ARTIST NOTES

Qua gave us some clues to the process and inspiration for each of the tracks on the album

1. painting monsters:

the idea was an overture that contained themes and sounds from the whole album into one small piece of music..it still does that to an extent but then began a life of its own

2. on clouds:

notice the repeating themes from "painting monsters" now played on different instruments

3. luckybuster:

the first song written for the album and was the first 'laptop' song i ever made... as it was recorded on the road - actually at my mum's house in adelaide over christmas holidays.

4.devileyes:

there is a film clip to this that perfectly sums this song up: homepage.mac.com/corneliusw/video/dev-ileyes_medium.mov

5.night sailing:

was written for a friend and has the most basic structure on the album... thought it was important at this point in the album to create some breathing space.

6. watercolour:

contains a classical guitar... my favourite instrument in the whole world.. i love the sound of nylon strings. the guitar intro was actually longer and was the bulk of the whole song but i ended up cutting it down – just in case it got played on ABC Classic FM.

7.stranger comforts:

a song about finding comfort in chaos... the opening rhythmic sound is my (chaotic) timetable from uni converted into a sound, then treated and slowly over time arranged. eventually flattening out to riding, pulsing, comfortable rhythm - still with a few spikes - just like my year at uni.

8. happy domestika:

most of the sounds are recorded from domestic appliances in my house and processed. it's made from the off-cuts of a sound-design for an animation instillation i was working on.

9.low hanging fruit

a track written purely to work between these two songs - bridging the gap. i've always pictures possums eating fruit at night for this track. i really don't know why

10.output

an exercise in drum percussion... this track was originally arranged during a live performance and is my favourite track to play live.

11.secret space

it was recorded in a beautiful house on Phillip Island, Victoria with the bulk done in 30 minutes... if you listen very carefully you can hear penguins outside and my girlfriend eating an apple.

ALSO SEE

Qua Interview in Cyclic Defrost Issue 6 (www.cyclicdefrost.com)

Qua's album *Forgetabout* is also on Surgery Records

www.surgeryrecords.com.au

www.quamusic.com

OTHER SOUNDS

My Bloody Valentine – *Loveless* (EMI) :

Kevin Shields amazing album from 1991. Layer upon layer of guitar, sampled, re-sampled. A seminal record that Shields never followed up.

Pluramon – *Dreams Top Rock* (Sonig) :

Marcus Schmickler's digital 'remake' of *Loveless* from 2003.

Manitoba – *Up In Flames* (Leaf) :

The entire shoegazer canon compressed into 37 minutes of sampledelia.

Superscience – *Love Like Life In Minature* (Surgery)

Clue To Kalo – *Come Here When You Sleepwalk* (Leaf) :

Two albums of quietist indie/electronics from Qua's former labelmate from Adelaide.