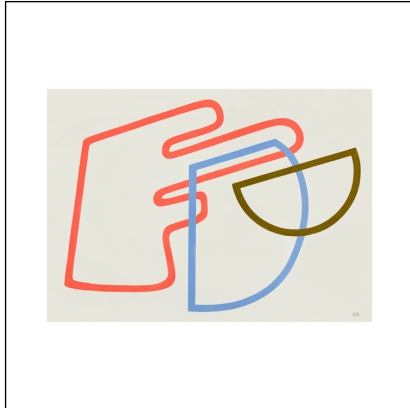




IRASCIBLE MUSIC



SELLING (USA)

On Reflection

Label: City Slang

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EPK: irascible.ch/releases/selling/on-reflection/

It's easy to eye collaborative records between two established artists with either a weary sigh or a degree of cynicism. In an age where a track or record seems to perform better directly in relation to how many artist names are on the digital byline, it can often feel like engineered circumstance or a desire to exponentially boost appeal comes before any natural creative endeavour. Selling is rooted in a long-standing friendship and prior creative history.

Having first met a decade ago, the two have prior history together: Jas has mixed two Gold Panda records, including the breakthrough debut 'Lucky Shiner'. In between, Gold Panda and SMD played shows together in the UK, US and Japan. So further collaboration was a natural progression, but as Derwin notes, not an inevitable one: "We talked about 'we should just get together and make some tunes some day'. But you always say that with people and it never happens", he notes, wryly. Happily though, the truism was dispelled. For Jas, the appeal was two-fold. "Selling was made for fun, really as an excuse to get Derwin to come to my house and drink tea. I like to think that enjoyment is audible in the record", he notes. Additionally, Jas was drawn into working with someone who could offer a different way of creating in the studio, given he already has a successful and enjoyable partnership with his lifelong Simian Mobile Disco partner James Ford. "I have always enjoyed how natural and unschooled Derwin's approach to music is. I know that sounds like some sort of veiled insult but it's not at all, electronic music is littered with well constructed, sensibly arranged tracks that follow a logical harmonic theme, almost all of that music can get fucked."

From Derwin's side, having a collaborator for the first time was appealing. "I've always been a solo artist, so it's a lot. When you work on your own, you're highly critical of what you make because it's all yours, and there's no one else to enjoy it with. It can feel like work very quickly." 'On Reflection' ultimately grew from a series of sounds and ideas that were quickly recorded and then edited down to their purest form. It's a record that exists in spontaneity and quick, gut decisions rather than any sort of laboriously plotted selection of notes and sounds.

Made in Jas' studio, which is a converted barn at his home in Kent, the record was made "in between eating sandwiches", Jas confides. Put together at a leisurely pace, Derwin would visit a few days at a time and the two would split their time between making tunes, walking Jas' two greyhounds and visiting a local farm shop each day. "They've got this farm shop called Macknades, and it's incredible", sighs Derwin wistfully. "We'd go there every day and get fresh bread and cheese. A lot of cheese was eaten. Oh, and fudge."

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Touching on how the record was formed, Jas adds “The heart of the record is [Hardware sequencer] Cirklon, it’s such a brilliant sequencer. Unusually we didn’t use the pallet of Gold Panda, which is MPC-driven, or SMD, which is modular synth driven. We started most tracks out with quite cheap 90s rack-mount synths, the type that can be bought on ebay for 30 quid. Even though these are totally digital they really have a distinctive character to them, kind of grainy and shit but in a charming way. Obviously there was a bit of synth stuff, we were not adhering to any rules but I usually think that choosing a palette of sounds to start with gives you a good chance of getting a cohesive record.” “It’s the most immediate and natural record I’ve ever made,” concedes Derwin. “I never thought I would be a collaboration person, but I guess it’s finding the right person to make a record with.”

Derwin explains “We didn’t make this for a label or something. Initially, it was just us mucking around. There was no plan to make an album. Originally I thought we were going to make a track here and there and stick them out on vinyl. But then, we had an album that sounded quite good and it was like ‘well if we have an album’s worth of stuff, maybe we should just release it’. It became a thing, I suppose.”

“But we’ll quit if it becomes a smash hit record.”

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