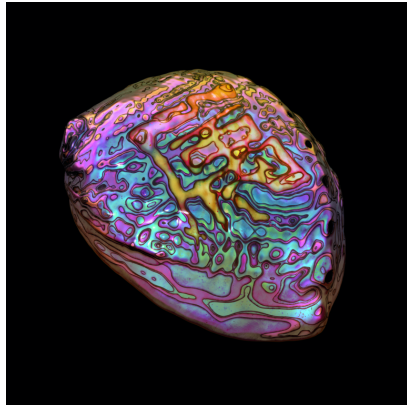




IRASCIBLE MUSIC



IAN CHANG (USA)

Album: 属 Belonging

Label: City Slang

Release Date: 24.04.20

EPK: irascible.ch/releases/ianchang/belonging

On '属 Belonging', in nine concise, largely instrumental pop songs, Chang conjures a personal cosmos. At every level, his music sings with earnest and deceptive simplicity. The album's melodies are intimate, its rhythms rewarding, and yet, just beneath the surface glimmers innovation, as if the neurons firing in each melodic idea have become audible. From the tradition of Bjork, Burial, and Flying Lotus, Chang breathes a new kind of human vulnerability into electronica.

When Chang describes his creative process, the phrase "third culture" keeps coming up. Born in the colony of Hong Kong in 1988, Chang has lived a nomadic life. Stationed out of New York for 10 years, he built an impressive roster of progressive pop collaborators. Now relocated to Dallas, Texas, Chang's discovered an inquisitive confidence that can only come from newfound isolation. Between tours, he dedicated himself to developing his international musical language, facilitated by a home studio and a burgeoning relationship.

Chang's magic starts with his method: from an improvised foundation of sampled percussion, he follows the innate logic of a musical conversation, allowing his compositional forms to reveal themselves. The album's three vocal features - KAZU (Blonde Redhead), Kiah Victoria and Hanna Benn - weren't anticipated at the project's outset; they arose like friendships, unpredictably complex and increasingly rare, a consequence of Chang's ubiquitous receptivity. Whereas on his EP 'Spiritual Leader' (2017) Chang limited himself to capturing unedited performances without overdubs, on this release the percussionist expands his palate, burrowing deeper into a layered, symphonic subconscious. Consequently, Chang's formidable growth as a producer is on display. Reflecting the album's bottom-up, performance-as-composition construction, his music conveys an intuitive sense of wholeness, carrying its experimental ethos without pretence. The resulting album

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Place du Nord 7, 1005 Lausanne

Geroldstrasse 33, 8005 Zürich

www.irascible.ch

D-CH Promotion: Niklaus Buehler

niklaus@irascible.ch; 044 271 32 83

F-CH Promotion: Gilles Kaeser

gilles@irascible.ch; 078 976 00 25



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unfolds like a confessional exploration, complicating the lines between rhythm and melody, modernity and antiquity, exuberance and meditation. For his first time in the aesthetic driver's seat, Chang hopes that '属 Belonging' may connect with those who have found a home in their not-at-homeness. The album represents a tumultuous period of enormous activity and advance, rooted in an eye-of-the-hurricane peacefulness.

On '属 Belonging,' the sense that nothing is planned yet all falls into place allows us to reconsider what we really need in order to belong. In his willingness to start over again and again, to let the music guide him (instead of the other way around), Chang reveals a home without boundary.

'属 Belonging' introduces a musical contradiction: complete yet ever-evolving, neighbourly yet global, precise yet instinctive, familiar yet innovative. Ian Chang's debut both satisfies and challenges modern expectations of catchy electronica. May we find ourselves at home in the paradox.

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