

LA PRIEST (UK)

«Inji» (Domino, Release: 26.06.2015)



Inji is the debut solo album by Sam Dust, AKA LA Priest. *Inji* reasserts Dust as a truly idiosyncratic voice in British music, applying the same frantically eclectic, mischievous and wilfully absurd spirit of his previous band, the beloved *Late of the Pier*, to ever more nuanced and affecting songwriting and composition.

Just like its genesis story, *Inji* is a record that poses as many questions as answers. It has its own logic, in its own time zone, and for the duration of its forty four minutes the listener shares in this too. If it doesn't conform it's because it's not supposed to.

"I'm this musical techno-hermit who doesn't have a watch but has 30 synthesizers and a 4 track in a nice place in the mountains," says Dust.

The ten surreal love songs of *Inji* go from the obscene space-age stadium rock guitar solo of "Oino", the maddeningly catchy digi-dub single that Dust leaked sample-by-sample on a suitably enigmatic website at the turn of the year, to "Learning To Love", the record's gargantuan, eight minute long prog-house centrepiece and "Occasion", a melting martian Prince come-on. *Inji* confounds and delights in equal measure, at every turn.

"Lady's In Trouble With The Law" boasts a lithe, sensual soul chorus about getting arrested that feels at once haunted and horny whilst the insectoid instrumental ambience of "Lorry Park", twists and turns and burrows into the brain as creepily as the most classic Aphex Twin material. Elsewhere, "Fabby", another instrumental, juxtaposes a gorgeous, cascading piano figure that'd make Benjamin Britten proud with percussion that sounds like the clashing of two swords and album closer, the bubbling, aquamarine ballad "Mountain" finds Dust contorting his voice into an impossibly high, androgynous falsetto.

Throughout all the songs there's a reliance on feeling and intimation as opposed to any one lyrical theme, and although the notion of love, its joys and trials, heaviness and absurdity, can often be glimpsed, it's in a non-linear way that recalls the disruptive, deliberately misleading pop of artists such as David Sylvian, Arthur Russell and David Byrne. So when Dust opines "was I born to love you?" on "Mountain", it's just as likely to be about the titular mountain, or his dog, or the entire world itself, or nothing at all as it is any real object of romantic affection.

