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SARH (FR)

Album: s/t (Believe Recordings, release: 02.06.2014)



Named after the bustling city in the center of the Sahel desert, Sarh is an unlikely duo. Their self-titled debut is a work that came to life over several months of train journeys between Madrid and Barcelona and of songs recorded at 2am in an apartment kitchen. Sarh is a partnership who continue to be enriched by the ideas of the other.

<https://www.facebook.com/SARHMUSIC>

Made up of DJ Pone, a hip hop DJ best known for his role in the collective Birdy Nam Nam and recent solo venture with Ed Banger Records, and Jose Reis Fontao, the guitarist and vocalist of rock band Stuck in the Sound.

It is a project that offers them the luxury of variation from their norm in Birdy Nam Nam and Stuck in the Sound. The unexpected result is that Sarh is not hip hop or rock, but a seductive wave of electro pop. It is reminiscent of Dead Can Dance, John Carpenter and Dario Argento, who fascinated both Jose and DJ Pone as adolescents. It is both fantastical and surreal, but by no means quiet.

To put it plainly, it is an irresistible sound that flirts with introspection and self-reflection. For example, when Jose sings «*I'm drowning, I am drowning*» throughout the appropriately-named 'Welcome to Sarh', it doesn't stifle but evokes a kind of semi-bitter immersion. The songs weave between them a mental landscape where the darkness and the light are not yet separated: where they pulse together. Pone has skilfully crafted the soundscape and Jose has enchanted it with melody.

On the haunting 'Blind Man', when Jose sings «*In the darkness you make me like I'm free again*», the darkness is, paradoxically, a kind of access to the clarity that we are only ever able to borrow. The album «Sarh» is crimped with addictive melodies that echo the catchy pop of The Zombies' on 'Summertime of Broken Heart', the soaring compositions of Jeff Buckley in 'Sailing With Lost Souls' and likenesses to Radiohead in 'Aïssa'. The intertwining loops, in a minimalist opera, offer us a journey to another world.



Members:

José Reis Fontao

DJ Pone

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