

THEE SILVER MT. ZION MEMORIAL ORCHESTRA (CAN)

«*Fuck Off Get Free We Pour Light On Everything*»

(Release: 17.01.2014, Constellation Records)



Thee Silver Mt. Zion Memorial Orchestra has pared back to five players. They have managed a handful of short tours in the past couple of years (in the gaps between Godspeed! You Black Emperor commitments) and as anyone who has seen the band in its recent incarnation can attest, their current sound is more honed, laser-guided and bone-rattling than ever, melding hardcore, blues, garage and dark metal influences that have nothing to do with anything so quaint as “post-rock” (a tag the group has always and rightly rejected).

Thee Silver Mt. Zion Memorial Orchestra (SMZ) has traced a barbed-wire arc of genre-defying protest music since its inception in 1999. Formed by Efrim Menuck, with Thierry Amar and Sophie Trudeau, the initial iteration of the band was a predominantly instrumental trio that forged a more intimate and ragged chamber-punk than Godspeed You! Black Emperor, the other group in which all three founding SMZ members also played (and continue to play). Through seven albums from 2000-2010, SMZ expanded its line-up and shifted towards an increasing use of lead and group vocals, with Menuck penning politically-charged lyrics to anchor long-form multi-movement compositions that juxtaposed electrified guitars against a 4-piece string section of violins, cello and contrabass.

Fuck Off Get Free We Pour Light On Everything is the first definitive document of the band's newfound sound and style as a quintet. It's also their first single LP-length work since the band's debut record as a trio almost 15 years ago, and features road-tested pummeling rock-outs “Fuck Off Get Free (For The Island Of Montréal)”, “Take Away These Early Grave Blues” and “What We Loved Was Not Enough” alongside the previously unheard lullabies/minuets “Little Ones Run” and “Rains Thru The Roof At Thee Grande Ballroom (For Capital Steez)” and the album centerpiece “Austerity Blues” with its closing lyric “Lord let my son live long enough to see that mountain torn down” sung in varying incarnations throughout the second half of this 14-minute epic.

This lyric in many ways encapsulates Menuck's unflinching take on a world replete with shabbiness, greed and injustice, seen through the lens of parenthood, mortality, endurance and defiance. There are few other musicians who deliver social critique with the courage and honesty of lines like “All our cities gonna burn / All our bridges gonna snap / All our pennies gonna rot / Lightning roll across our tracks / All our children gonna die”. Feel-good music this is not; but neither can it reductively be tagged apocalyptic or world-weary. *Fuck Off Get Free* rages with scorn and with hope, utterly passionate but pointedly unromantic. Thee Silver Mt. Zion once again demonstrates, like few other bands working today, that there is much to fight for and against, and plenty more fight songs to sing.

Band:

Thierry Amar (*Contrebasse, Electric Bass, Plucked Piano, Vocals*)

Efrim Manuel Menuck (*Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Mellotron, Vocals*)

Jessica Moss (*Violin, Plucked Piano, Vocals*)

Sophie Trudeau (*Violin, Plucked Piano, Vocals*)

David Payant (*Drums, Organ, Vocals*)

Online:

cstrecords.com/thee-silver-mt-zion/

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