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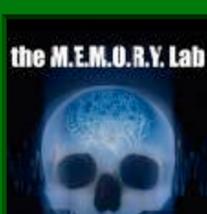
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MUSIC reviews REVIEWS

the M.E.M.O.R.Y. Lab - Modern Expressing Machines of Revolutionary Youth

Thursday, October 01 2009 @ 02:00 AM PDT
Contributed by: Perceptron



Artist: Memory Lab 

Title: Modern Expressing Machines of Revolutionary Youth

Label: D-trash Records 

EBM / Electro / Experimental

Tracklist:

- 01 Cambia (Change)
- 02 A Bad Dream (the Wrong Dream)
- 03 Divine Eating
- 04 Mind Rape (Government's Business)
- 05 Another Nail into the Cross
- 06 My Little World
- 07 To Go All the Way
- 08 Mother's Womb

the M.E.M.O.R.Y. Lab is the project of Marc Urselli and Nicola "The old Nick" Curri (singer). Songs for this album were recorded between 1994 and 1999, but never released in a full-length. This material has been digitally remastered in New York, more than 10 years after recording. Note Urselli enjoys a successful career as recording engineer, producer composer etc. in New York. He has won 3 Grammy Awards, in 2005 works and tours with John Zorn, Lou Reed, Sting, Eric Clapton among others. Curri lives in Italy and focus on visual arts.

"Cambia (Change)" features samples, heavy beats and quite sophisticated percussion. The later may remind the sound of Pneumatic Detach, yet without all the rhythmic fineries. We find many sounds effects, applied to the basic rhythmic layer, adorned with electronic sounds and threatening synths. The rageful militant modified vocals are truly delightful. Just sad that they appear almost only on this first track.

Some tracks rather focus on the development of anguishing atmospheres. "A Bad Dream (the Wrong Dream)" is an exemple. But, note the amazing rhythmic part in this track, which definitely indicate The M.E.M.O.R.Y. Lab is about hybridization of several musical genres. Distant vocals, electronic noises and darkly insane synths layers create a comparable atmosphere on the ambient track "Mother's Womb".

"Divine Eating" features quite raw beats and percussions' sounds, giving a rather mechanical feeling. Together with the tortured voice and progressive synths, the track really becomes attractive the slower part where guitars sounds appear. Here, we get a truly electro/indus/metal mix, giving a futuristic urban insane atmosphere. Some electronic noises appear to be a bit old.

"Mind Rape (Government's Business)" and "My Little World" feature a more electro path yet not devoid of heavy percussions and heavy guitars' sounds. The intensity of such track may remind the later experimentation of bands such as Count Nosferatu Kommando or Punish Yourself, in a less brutal way, but sharing some perverse synths and sick atmospheres (at least for "Mind Rape (Government's Business)"). Such track totally makes one raising the volume...

The comparison really takes its whole meaning with "To Go All the Way". This begins with a breathtaking introduction, the most brutal of the album. Maybe, however, not as chaotic and noisy as Dissecting Table, but quite comparable. Filled with percussions and palm-mutes sounds, it develops a sick atmospheres, through vocoded vocals, gratings and repetitive mechanical sounds. The specificity of this one is the alternation between sick indus interludes and brutal and noisy assaults.

The lugubrious "Another Nail into the Cross" begins with a rather gothic touch made by perfectly suiting vocals, organ melody and various synths layers. Suddenly, there's an explosion of guitars and loud electronic noises! The main catchy themes are taken back: wonderfully integrated into the new ensemble, they get another, wider, meaning!

This sophisticated track has an amazing potential...

Negative sides: We may have expected more aggressiveness from sounds, and especially vocals (but on the first song), but let's note the variety of vocals' styles is fine and fits well the different atmospheres of the tracks.

Some parts may sound a bit repetitive and we notice that the quality and complexity of tracks is rather unequal. This may be explained by the heterogeneous material, ranging from 1994 to 1999, which was an experimentation time for Urselli... And this is the kind of experimentation that we'd like to see more often! Achieved and Who would guess it has been created more than 10 years ago?

Positive sides: Indeed, this doesn't sound as old as it is, apart from some noises and electronic sounds! Of course, digital remastering may have helped, but this doesn't remove anything to the avangardist characteristic of these inspired compositions.

The contrast between percussion, raw "palm-mute-like" sounds and sweet aerial synths layer and electronic noises is well-done. Atmospheres developped range from various things such as Punish Yourself, Count Nosferatu Kommando, Atari Teenage Riot, to Velvet Acid Christ, Pneumatic Detach, and hellektro indus / aggro-tech stuff, or even slightly to In Slaughter Natives and other more classical old school indus projects.

Given the time where it was created, the integration of so many influences and the challenging mix between metal, indus, gothic influences and electronic music is coherent, efficient and convincing. Therefore, this album is innovative and this music was avant-gardist! Thus, it's suitable not only for fans of abovementioned bands, but also highly recommended for all the desperate seekers of the musical hybrid of metal, dark hellektro and more traditional indus! Finally, we got a serious candidate for a "trans-genre" step further, which will kick many asses, namely: the M.E.M.O.R.Y. Lab.

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