Brainwashed - Retina.it, "Descending Into Crevasse"

Written by Creaig Dunton
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Having been around since the early part of the 1990s, this duo of Lino Monaco and Nicola Buono seem as if they took their cue from that periods isolationist movement, that darker, bleak spin-off of ambient that had a short, but brilliant life. Heavily effected loops, guitars, and synths float together in an inviting dissonance throughout this album's six tracks.

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Opener "Synth on Axis" (with guest collaborator Heidseck) and the closing title track embrace the album title literally, both conjuring images of drifting through aquatic murk. Slow, bubbling reverberations, bass heavy swells, and unidentifiable sounds slithering by feel like the oceanic equivalent of Thomas Köner's Arctic endeavors.

"Attrazione Magnetica" takes that sense of drift and exploration and casts it in a more cosmic sensibility. Loops of rhythmic guitar, heavily filtered and processed, arrive to just drift away again into the darkness. Between the overall darker mood and the erratic, sub bass swell that is monstrous on its own, there is a more sinister feel overall, although here it is blackness of space rather than our own seas.

The remaining pieces don't have as much of an environmental reference point, but instead construct slowly evolving ambient passages from heavily treated loops. "Freezing the Fourth String" begins simple enough, with an unending droning note that becomes more and more prominent, slowly augmented with other abstract loops, before finally what sounds like a symphonic sample is added in, casting everything in a much more melodic direction before slowly concluding.

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"Moonshine" similarly takes its time, building upon a simple, but progressing melodic loop. There is just the right balance of repetition and change: it stays static enough to lock into a hypnotic groove, but slowly works in additional sounds so that, by the end, it sounds significantly different than how it began.

Isolationist ambient constructed from loops can be a difficult proposition: one of the reasons the genre died out so quickly is that almost everyone with a sampler and a reverb unit tried their hand and putting out an album, and too often the result was a boring sonic equivalent of beige wallpaper. While Retina.it are not necessarily revolutionizing the genre with *Descending Into Crevasse*   , it makes for a strong nod to a sound that time forgot, and had it been released during that period, it would have been clearly on the better end of that genre's spectrum.

samples:

- [Synth on Axis](#)
- [Moonshine](#)
- [Attrazione Magnetica](#)