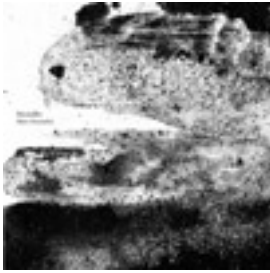


Brainwashed - Mamiffer, "Mare Decendrii"

Written by Craig Dunton

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After two excellent recent split releases, the duo of Faith Coloccia and Aaron Turner have put out a full length CD that manages to spread out over an hour and still retain the variety of moody and complex sounds that they did so well in previous shorter bursts.

[Sige](#) / [Conspiracy](#)

Between those two splits, Mamiffer did both denser heavy rock-influenced sounds as well as more pensive, piano driven ambient works, both of which receive good representation here. Above all, there's an over-reaching sense of bombast and drama that, while tinged with prog-rock tendencies, never falls into any of the pretentious pitfalls that usually mar such works and instead have a regal flair most strive for, but few attain.

"As Freedom Rings" opens slowly, with a soft panned organ that picks up additional tones and sounds with each pass, bringing in electronic textures and washes of white noise. Like many of the pieces on here, Coloccia's piano playing eventually becomes the focus, flanked by synth layers, Turner's restrained guitar feedback, and hollow percussion. Layers come and go, eventually building to a dramatic crescendo that is punctuated with quiet, layered vocals; choral and chanted, that close the track powerfully.

The long, ambient "We Speak In The Dark" stretches out for over 20 minutes, beginning with expansive, drawn out notes of unclear origin that become more grounded when the piano arrives, a punchier contrast to the frozen tones off in the distance. It has a comparatively slower, more deliberate pace than before, but with more grandiose outbursts, including full string arrangements courtesy of Eyvind Kang, who also did such work with Sunn O)))'s recent *Monoliths & Dimensions* album. The chaotic, speaking in tongue vocals that are male and female, screamed, growled, and chanted add a frightening, inhuman like quality to a cinematic piece.

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Piano and drums also characterize the final two pieces, both of which also include strings and guitar, but each go into drastically different territories. "Eating Our Bodies" emphasizes the guitar a bit more, putting on a heavier, more tense sound that eventually closes in slow, dark and pounding territory. Conversely, "Iron Water" is more concise, first as a carefully measured piano and guitar duet that is simply beautiful before unraveling, leaving echoed vocals, ambience, and shimmering guitar noise in its wake. Even with the long subsonic rumbles that close the album, it has an overall lighter quality to it.

Like the split LPs I've reviewed recently, *Mare Decendrii* doesn't fit into any specific genre, nor can it be easily explained or described, it simply is what it is. While the two on the surface sound nothing alike, there is a certain shared vibe with Earth's more recent work. Both have a similar, cinematic feeling that conjures up a lot of feelings and images that strengthen the work. However, Mamiffer's use of piano, strings, and more abstract electronic textures are what sets them apart, helping them carve out their niche.

samples:

- [As Freedom Rings](#)
- [We Speak In The Dark](#)
- [Iron Water](#)