

Static Dark

INTERVIEW WITH SANDRO STRAUB (APRIL 29, 2013)



Q: Where does the name "Static Dark" come from?

A: I guess it's been there from the very beginning, I just didn't realise it for a long time. No seriously, a couple of years ago a friend of mine told me that there is something static as well as dark about my music. And he was right. There is something static and dark about myself as a person too but forgive me if I don't go into the details as it's kind of personal. People who know me will understand what I mean.

Q: Why did you call your debut album "Cross-Section"?

A: Simply because it actually is a cross section of my work of the last 8 years. I created more than 100 instrumentals and album/EP ideas just for myself and most of them were based on specific themes. "Rigel" and "Antares" originally come from an unreleased album called "Space(s) - Vol 1" whereas "Keraudren Nightfall" was taken from an unreleased EP called "Southern Cross". But for my first official release I just didn't want to throw an old album or EP concept of mine on the market. I wanted to develop a new concept. So the title "Cross-Section" in the end became not only just a pun about my body of work, it can also be interpreted as being about the past & the future, earth & space or imagination & realism. I like the ambivalence of it.

Q: What's the story about the beginning of the "Static Dark" sound?

A: Funny story actually. I used to write my own rap lyrics for a couple of years and I had a lot of song ideas together. But I didn't have the beats. It really drove me crazy that I always had to perform my stuff on the instrumentals of the big shots so I started to make my own. At least I tried. But I had to realise the fact that whatever it was that I was doing here, it had nothing in common with Hip-Hop as we know it. The themes and the music grew stronger week after week, eventually rendering a final addition of my voice and my words to them totally unnecessary as well as inappropriate. So all of a sudden "Static Dark" instrumental electronica started to take shape. That was a great moment for me but not exactly what I had in mind at the beginning (laughs). But the way I see it, I was flawed as a rapper anyway.

Q: Why is that?

A: Well you see, my big problem is that the content of the lyrics mostly overshadowed my delivery of them on the mic. I focus less on the flow, to me the words always were much more important than the technique. So maybe it was more along the lines of "spoken word" instead of true rap music.

Q: Do you prefer the "electronica" over the "rap" genre now?

A: Not necessarily, I still write lyrics in my native tongue as well as in English and I still love to do it. And I don't write only Rap lyrics. Just recently I had the honor to contribute to the songs of a good friend who is very talented rock musician. But let's face facts, I'm nowhere near being talented enough to compete with rappers in the English language and when I perform songs in my native Swiss-German tongue, no one outside of Switzerland would understand the words. So this is the great thing about instrumental music: it's truly international because it's not attached to the knowledge of any language. Anyone can understand it. I prefer that.

Q: Who are the inspirational sources for your music?

A: Difficult question for there are many. I listen to a whole lot of different genres of music, I always did. I love electronica just as much as I love classical, metal or hip hop music. I can enjoy a good country song as much as a good old fashioned rock'n'roll. So my influences really are countless. But when it comes to electronica there's Future Sound of London, Biosphere, Fluke and Sasha that come to mind immediately. But I never wanted to copy one of them, at least not intentionally. They were an inspiration of sorts but there's also Iron Maiden or Stabbing Westward and certainly Nine Inch Nails that fed my urge to make music tirelessly over the years. Maybe some of their signature sounds can be found in my songs but that would not have happened on purpose on my behalf.

Q: So how do you write your songs for that matter?

A: In a vacuum of sorts..but it's hard to explain the meaning of this. I just clear my head, sit down to start up my computer and fire away. I experiment a lot. Some songs remain as a work in progress for several months, even years. "Whiteout", song number 3 on the album is a good example. The first version of it was created in 2006. The intention behind it? To create the audio equivalent of a "whiteout". Now what does that sound like? For a song like "Antares" all I needed was a picture. How could a huge sun/star like this sound like? Well, fire away, experiment and eventually you might find out, right? This is how I compose my songs and how they received their names. Most of the times, all I need is a picture and some kind of information behind it, that might inspire me just enough to create a new song. I can't sit down to do something à la "let's make a song that sounds like 'The Prodigy'", that's not the way I would want to work. Simply copying your favourite acts, now where the hell is the fun in that?

Q: What would you like to say to someone who just bought your album?

A: Well. first and foremost I would like to say: thanks a lot! And now let your imagination really go apeshit to this music, because this is what I did while I was creating it (laughs). Sit back and enjoy. Close your eyes and let your imagination run wild. And I hope that it met with your expectations.