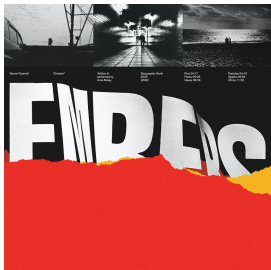


Brainwashed - Secret Pyramid, "Embers"

Written by Eve McGivern

Sunday, 23 August 2020 00:00 - Last Updated Saturday, 22 August 2020 09:19



Embers: the smoldering or glowing remains of a fire. Something fading, but still capable of pain when touched. The transition of a bright flame being extinguished into darkness, mirroring the cycle of day into night. Vancouver-based composer Amir Abbey is Secret Pyramid, creating his transcendental neo-classical dreamworks at night, giving light to meditative sonic works that sound at home in a cathedral, offering sonorousness of awe and sorrow echoing majestically through vast space and settling in the soul. Abbey's latest, *Embers*, works magic in these ways, offering a "less is more" approach creating the aural equivalent of wide open spaces filled with tranquillity and ephemerality.

[Geographic North](#)

Abbey is known to frequently work with an Ondes Martenot, an early electronic instrument (late 1920s) played by running a ring along a wire, and sounding much like a theremin or an effected-treated cello. This instrument continues to be utilized on *Embers*, along with string, field recordings, loops and distortion. The balance of these, drawn out and diffused, provide a subtle arrow to the heart.

Abbey's work has conceptually addressed emotive topics through composition and track titles, as can be seen and heard on such prior works as *Two Shadows Collide* and *Movements of Night*, but *Embers* served as a musical exorcism for Abbey as he struggled to process a very turbulent period of his life. Consequently, the album showcases both grief and tranquility, and the minimalism allows the emotions to ebb and flow with ease.

Each track title seems to suggest the possibility of embers, or in some way with a connection to embers: "Flares," "Particles," "Sparks," "Ohms." Abbey himself has explained, "It's a reflection of the impermanent, shifting, and fleeting aspects of our lives, both the good and the bad, that often spark something inside of us." This is an album suited for reflective times, but the sounds flow just as easily as a cinematic orchestration, in the vein of an Angelo Badalamenti score. The

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beauty of this album is hinted at the album's title, providing a gentle, fading burn that is deceptive in it's soft glow.

[Samples available here.](#)