

Brainwashed - Fennesz, "Hotel Paral.lel"

Written by John Kealy

Saturday, 03 November 2007 17:00 -



Ten years following its initial release, the debut album from Christian Fennesz gets the reissue treatment. Sometimes quite different from the joyous nature of his subsequent albums, it hints at the possibilities of what was to come. It is an interesting—if not altogether brilliant—document of his early work, some songs being mere experiments in texture and others where all the elements gel together to hit home.

[Editions Mego](#)

This is my first exposure to Fennesz's earlier works and it is a little bit of a surprise. The techniques and sounds that he later developed on albums like *Endless Summer* and *Venice* have not yet appeared. Instead of the bright and shimmering music I have become so used to there is a dark and gloomy ambience. However, moments of brilliance shine through, forewarning of what was to come. Even the now uncharacteristically menacing style of *Hotel Paral.lel*

is good in its own way and anticipates the warm, glitchy textures of later Fennesz material. The grinding rhythms of "Santora" are mildly aggressive but it is easy to see how the likes of this would get toned down and a more melodic sensibility will come through.

Stepping back from a dissection in hindsight of *Hotel Paral.lel*, the music taken on its own is a little distracted sounding but very good nonetheless. It is not immediately captivating (although the buzzsaw distorted guitar on "Dheli Pizza" is nothing if not attention grabbing) but reveals itself over a few listens. The music is split into somewhat noisy abstractions like "Nebenraum" and later a more rhythmical approach is taken. "Szabo" and "Traxdata" both come closer to the Fennesz I know and love. The beats are a little straightforward but the use of texture is what makes these tracks stand out. The breaking up of the sound and the introduction of glitches (yes, that word again) is like exploding candy for the ears. It is the final track (of the original issue, there are two bonuses included with the reissue) that prove what Fennesz is capable of; "Aus" is four minutes of processed guitar splendour.

Brainwashed - Fennesz, "Hotel Paral.lel"

Written by John Kealy

Saturday, 03 November 2007 17:00 -

To be honest, I much prefer where Fennesz has gone from here but it is nice to have this available again for a more complete picture of his work. *Hotel Paral.lel* may not be his best but it still is a quality album. For those who have the album from its original release, I cannot say if there is a difference in terms of sound quality and the bonuses (a previously vinyl only piece, "5," and a video for "Aus") are not substantial enough to be too worried about. Nevertheless, this is a nice release for the curious late comer to Fennesz to hear where it all began.

samples:

- [Sz](#)
- [Santora](#)
- [Aus](#)