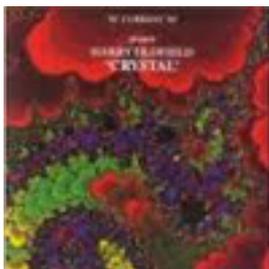


Brainwashed - Current 93 Present Harry Oldfield, "Crystal"

Written by Justin Patrick

Sunday, 25 September 2011 13:09 - Last Updated Monday, 26 September 2011 02:26



No matter what a person thinks of the music of Current 93, it must be recognized that David Tibet has always been a champion of other visionaries, whether they be in the realm of music, literature, or in the case of Harry Oldfield, science and invention. The "Current 93 present" series is just one example of Tibet's gift as a curator. In this series of discs (now out-of-print) he brings to light and showcases talents who might not otherwise have received outside their own circles. While some have been more renowned, such as Shirley Collins and Tiny Tim, others like Sveinbjörn Beinteinsson, the Venerable 'Chi.med Rig. 'dzin Lama, Rinpoche and Harry Oldfield have received less notice. Oldfield's work in the development and application of electro-crystal therapy is fascinating, and this musical artifact, created in accordance with his research is a wondrous, mutli-faceted specimen.

[Durtro](#)

Tibet was first introduced to Oldfield's work by Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson (or HÖH who also mixed one of the most beautiful tracks on this release) while in Reykjavik, Iceland back in 1986. The work of Harry Oldfield is very wide ranging, but he is perhaps most well known for his pioneering work in developing non-invasive methods for the analysis and balancing of the human energy field. Chief among these methods is his innovative combination of electromagnetism with quartz crystals to create what he has called "[Electro-Crystal Therapy](#)". There is nothing New Age about this practice. Yes, his work has been on the fringe of science, but it has gained recognition in it's orthodox circles. After all crystals have been used for many advanced technologies including radio and computers to microphones, speakers, and lasers. That stimulating them with pulses of high frequency electricity could have a healing effect should come as no surprise. His therapy involves placing crystals in tubes containing a conductive electrolyte brine solution, and putting those tubes around certain points of the body. The tubes are then attached to an electromagnetic generator that administers electrical frequencies to the crystals. These frequencies, interacting with the crystals, then balance and normalize the human or animal energy system. Oldfield likens this process to receiving a "molecular massage."

A similar procedure has been used by Harry to record the crystal music on this disc. Different

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crystal specimens were used in varying combinations with two Electro-Crystal Therapy sound generator units. Special frequencies were then pulsed into them, and the sounds were recorded. Five of the songs on the disc were mixed out of the resultant recordings by Ken Thomas, and a sixth by HÖH, the other twelve tracks are strict examples of the recordings of the crystal combinations. However, nothing else has been mixed into these tracks. All a listener gets is the sound of crystals pulsed with electromagnetic energy. David Tibet and John Balance were both present when these recordings were made.

So what does it all sound like? Fans of high-pitched sine waves and crackling static will find much to love here. There isn't much going on in the low-end spectrum. Although some songs drone and some create a good backdrop for other activities or just spacing out to, it's not very ambient. These are the sounds of crystals singing. The mixed tracks are the easiest ones to listen to. My one issue with the album is that the unmixed tracks just containing the pure crystal recordings are interspersed with the tracks that are mixed in some manner, that latter having more song like qualities. I feel it would have been better if the six "songs" were first, and the twelve examples of straight up crystal recordings comprised the last section. But that is a minor complaint for such an innovative record.

On "One" it almost sounds as if the quartz is whistling. As if wind is rushing through some icy cavernous tunnel. "Three," also mixed by Ken Thomas, is very odd. Ascending and descending fractal spirals ripple in and out of each other. It sounds like some of these crystals have been run through the up-and-down pulse of a slow flanger or phase shifter. I don't know if they have been or not. I do know that my favorite track, "Energy Is Eternal Delight," mixed by HÖH, was treated with various rhythmic delays. In the liner notes he wrote that "no attempts were made to have the end results aesthetically pleasing" the main principal being to emphasize the character of the crystals being used, but this is the track that turned out to be the highlight of the album for me. That such a production would be the work of Hilmar is easy to believe. This song is what the Earth sounds like if a moment is taken to listen to it breathe. It starts off soft, slowly undulating, cycling through a passage, breathing in and breathing out, then the icy crystalline structures emerge. The song is an abstract architecture of natural lines, latticework, striated surfaces, and interior coagulations. I have returned to this album, and to this song in particular, over and over again throughout the years. It does for sound what a prism does for light.

The fact that crystals can be used as a musical source begs the question: Why aren't more musicians using these techniques to create eerie, beautiful, mesmerizing, otherworldly music?

samples:

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- [One](#)
- [Three](#)
- [Energy Is Eternal Delight](#)