

VARIOUS ARTISTS – 25 YEARS OF HANDS

I have to admit that generally i don't love compilations, as usually they're products that contain only a couple of new songs and loads of remixes, but that's not the case of **25 years of HANDS**, a wonderful and complete pan of what the famous label guided by **Udo Wiessmann** has already offered and what has to offer today, and has to offer a lot: 48 new songs (it has to be specified) composed by 48 different artists, each of those, listening carefully, shows its stylistic different trademarks.

Since 1990 this label has grown a lot, initially searching for an identity until, in the late '90s, it represented one of the best examples of underground post-industrial experimentation, in the rhythmic noise scenario as well as in the IDM one, always showing the will to overcome the boundaries of the genres to create something new, original and, courageously, thanks to this approach, label showed to be perfectly able to manage the several products, most of which similar between themselves, that reached the market in the early 2000s.

25 years of HANDS isn't a retrospective, but a photo of what today, concretely, Udo's Hands and its roster can offer, and in this there's the intelligence of this operation: over the years, underground electronic music has evolved, and nobody can negate this, and maybe some nostalgic people won't like some kinds of experimentation, but Hands has always wanted that the music promoted by the label followed this direction: it's incredible how it's possible to find so much different approaches in a single label whose common trademark is noise. *Hands says noise*, yes, but everyone says it in its own way: although all the songs are quite interesting, there are some more inspired and some others less, artists that could have expressed something more various (if we think about their albums) and have lost their chance to do it here.

To the circle of the most inspired songs belong the new songs by **16pad noise terrorists**, **Angina P**, **Ambassador21**, **Edgey**, **hyDrone**, **Last days of S.E.X**, **Needle Sharing** and loads of others, while to the less inspired songs belong those of **Proyecto Mirage**, **Wieloryb**, **Geistform**, **Yura yura**, **MS Gentur**, very few. They're really monolithic episodes that don't express the variety of their works, but it's not so important: they will recharge you and will make you jump by means of their noise injections.

We've talked about this compilation saying that shows loads of different approaches: within it can be found engaging and tarantulated post-industrial visions such as those of **Shorai**, **Heimstatt**, **Yipotash**, **Morbus M**, as well as the IDM of **Totakeke** and the awesome as well as particular gem signed by **Schachtanlage Gegenort**, a definitely experimental and out-of-the-boundaries song. We find the rhythmic tribalism along with the rhythmic-industrial music of **Syntech** at his best, the dreaming-ambient mixture of **Talvekoidik**, the particularly well done evolution of rhythmic industrial of the very good **SaturnZlide**, the monumental fast drum 'n noise song of the landlords **Winterkälte**, the crossbreed assault of **Illegal Trade** and the brilliant songwriting of **Ambassador21** and **Tatum**, at the middle between industrial hardcore and constantly mutating industrial rhythmic, between distorted hardcore beats and scratches (as far as A21 are concerned), the very particular cinematographic and synthetic sound of **Incite/**, the versatility of the approach of **Kaibun**, between experimental and danceable music, and loads of others that won't be mentioned for reasons of space. Listening, in these cases, is the best advice.

However, if you're searching for the typical old school classic rhythmic noise episodes, there are some very engaging: **Monolith**, **Mono No Aware**, Edgey, **Hezzel**, <1949> (this last one characterized by a songwriting approach pretty similar to that of **Sonar**) are ready to make you dance, as well as the darker techno episodes, such as those of **Cervello Elettronico** (even if this, in particular, goes out of the boundaries), **Cacophoneuses** and Geistform.

25 years of HANDS is also a chance, for who writes, to discover acts that haven't released full lengths for many years, but that are the most interesting ones: the new Angina P song, between early rave and the coexistence of several different moods and rhythms, between atmosphere and broken rhythm, is one of the most intense and particular songs, that strongly recalls a certain 90's taste. The same could be said for the very particular **Norm's** song, a very long and alienating rhythmic industrial mantra, a *Sinfonie der Großstadt*. For who writes, having to tell the best episodes, that of hyDrone is definitely one of these: episodes that demonstrate, even after 25 years, how the avantgarde spirit of research has yet a lot to say: in particular, that of hyDrone is a very beautiful song that conceptually explores sound, that rethinks it, that plays with it, and that tries to find a new kind of expression starting again from scratch, as sometimes this is the only way that allows to generate new ideas.

Concluding, Hands Productions has reached its first 25 years of existence with a very brilliant compilation, that never have weak moments and that show that it has still a lot of things to say in music. It's not a retrospective, but a beautiful photo of the current situation that draws once again the several coordinates of a label that, although having always maintained its trademarks, has recently demonstrated to be opened to the current developments in the underground sound (and in the musical "formats" change) that are slowly imposing themselves in the underground electronic music area. Not simply IDM, not simply rhythmic noise, nor industrial, but, as written in the very well-made compilation box, electronic music and art. Since 1990.

Score: 9, 5

Label: Hands Productions

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