

## KFACTOR – GHASTLY MONOLITH

It doesn't matter if the so called *electro-industrial* genre is considered linked to the early 90's and now old fashioned or one of the most interesting expressions of the industrial word: this genre, called in this way for its huge use of electronic music and for its stylistic-rhythmic complexity, is still alive and even today still produces excellent gems.

In particular, Electro Aggression Records, in the last years, revealed itself as one of the major keepers of the most beautiful results. The **Ghastly monolith** of the Brazilian **kFactor** is part of the so-called trilogy which includes his work, that of the Swedish **Astma** and the new **Serpents** album, that saw the light about a month ago. The policy of EAR, surely particular, consists of releasing several albums together, taking its time, trying to obtain the best from its artists, with a particular attention to the concept of the triplet (more than someone will remember that the same thing happened about two years ago, and we deeply talked about it).

We learned to appreciate the talent of the Brazilian musician when, some years ago, his songs were published on **Soundcloud**, and if at that time his influences were very clear (first of all, the European *electro industrial*) and his trademark wasn't developed at all, now, after the release of his first studio album, we can say, without problems, that his personal approach to the genre is listenable in the work.

Produced by a well-known *underground electro* act, especially in the *dark electro* genre, **Arnte** of the **Pyrroline** project, who released his last album for EAR too, the first thing the listener thinks of is the very clear cleanliness of the sounds, characteristic which is the counterpoint to **Junior** vocals, distorted and made dirty by *noisy* layers, which succeed in disorienting the listener, transforming his music (forget the Rio carnival) in an electronic flux directly coming from the farther space. Solemn and precious, monolithic and rigid, cold and influenced by the '80s sound too, these are some inputs useful to try to introduce this double, massive, uneasy work.

As very well suggested by the album title, the debut of kFactor puts itself in the electronic sky like a ghastly monolith, cold and distant, an album characterized by a succession of slow and martial rhythms, that has a lot in common with **The Klinik** career, and in particular with the less considered albums, those more strongly electronic of the '90s, but it could be possible to find some linkages with the early **Dive** productions. Junior presents his music as particularly influenced by the Belgian scene which masters are **Vomito Negro** and **Signal Aout 42** too, but here the music is radically different and, if these linkages have to be found, they reside in the use of often slow rhythms, heavy like huge stones.

What distinguishes him from his influences is that, if these acts are more strictly related to *EBM* and, then, to a strongly physical approach to music, kFactor stands in an ivory tower and elaborates complex structures which sound as more mental, the result is abstract and rare, and this is definitely a kind of sound more linked to the *electro industrial* genre than to the *electronic body music*. Abstraction, and the artificiality of the sound proper of the genre, that most of the times takes back a particular '80s electronic taste, an element that adds even more abstraction to what is listened to. The monolith represents the totemic representation of the human degeneration, of the evilness and the selfishness, therefore it's an outsourcing, the will to give shape to the loathing that the musician (and us too) see everyday.

As far as music is concerned, for what regards the first disc, there's an alternation of more squared and martial songs, as in the *opener Error*, and of *divertissement* close in some way to the Pyrroline sound, and *Take a chance* is a clear example of this kind, very influenced by the sound of the early '90s. In *Claustrophobia* the *beat* is modern and *techno*-derived, and the melodic idea is more linked to the *old school electro industrial*, but, although all the songs are more than good, kFactor expresses its best skills and shows at its best his trademark into the slow, martial and more abstract episodes, like in *Disorient*, a title which definitely represents the *mood* of the song. Although the *vocals* are often used, the musician's music is quite often instrumental and spiced with samples, and this is an example of the influence of the canadian *electro industrial* scene too.

In the album there's space for more danceable episodes too, mechanic ballets that could find their place into particularly experimental selections, such as the already mentioned *Take a chance* or *Iron tree*, counterposed to the more mental and philosophic episodes such as the evocative *Symmetry* and *White monolith*. With songs like *You... worm!* and *Prototype*, the listener will feel the sensation of listening to songs that every *electro industrial* musician would have composed, but that rarely happened. The first album ends with a certain sensation of *deja vu*, something already partially listened into the Pyrroline last record, maybe because of its production or maybe because Arnte influenced Junior in some way.

Talking about the second disc, **Old school prototype**, as far as the non-remix songs (nine) are concerned, the listener has the sensation of listen to other great examples of *electro industrial* which *mood* is apocalyptic and which sounds are mental, spiced with end-of-the-world atmospheres, but that, anyway, are less experimental when we think about the songs contained in the first disc. Here the listener will find old and new kFactor songs in which the influence of the masters of *electro industrial* are more listenable, always maintaining an awesome quality. The more squared 4 / 4 sets the development of the evocative songs, very well produced, in which the will of searching a personal trademark (so very well present in the first disc) is listenable. It's clear that, instead of the first disc, here there are more *dark electro* elements and atmospheres, in particular in the melodic ideas of songs such as *No land* and *Faithful children*, just to cite two songs (but this thing could be widened to most of the songs).

Even the remixes, here relatively few, absolutely deserve the listening, in particular those that sounds more personal, such as that of **Tri-state** for *Prototype*, which shows their taste for theatrical structures, thanks to a "performance-like sound" and thanks to the operistic female vocals that characterize their style, while *You... worm!* remixed by the swedish trio **Astma** is more squared than the original one, more strongly *electronic body music*. Very hard, *old school* influenced, is the *remix* made by **Soillodge** for *A blind spot*, which give it that physical sound that, voluntarily, the original song doesn't show, and even Serpents and the american project **Jihad**, which remix *A dead place*, succeed in creating very good tunes. In particular, the american project remixes the song giving it a lighter and '80s mood, paying a lot of attention to the melodic piano element.

In conclusion, what emerges from the kFactor's debut album is a quite personal approach to the *electro industrial* matter, which additional value, but this is shared by all the EAR releases, is the way in which, in particular through the *remixes*, the label constantly tries, often with success, to unify old and new acts into a common place, trying to create a new proper scene that, after the crisis of the genre, began to fall to pieces, until a bunch of passionate persons decided to start it again. In the meanwhile, the dream goes on, and we follow it with great interest.

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