

LA MAIN - NOUS NE SERONS PLUS RIEN

Minimal electronic music from France: not a surprise for the lovers of this kind of music, where there have always been many francophone bands; **La Main** is the project we are going to review, and it finds a perfect place in this field with their sophomore album **Nous ne serons plus rien**, following their 2012 self-produced debut **Ton nom**. We find here twelve songs where dark love stories are characterized by a dark and pessimistic romanticism linked to a cultural world that lovers of the France culture (and not only them) would easily recognize, between symbolism and the works of **Goya**; the music is always on the path of a retro minimal synth linked very closely to the 80's and to the dreamy and decadent atmospheres weaved by synth and drum machine, without overlooking the full of reverbs vocals of the mastermind **Joann Guyonnet**.

We start with *A lock* and its keys based on emotive bass lines, giving us melancholic melodies soon accompanied by 4/4 beats and by the distant voice of the singer; at the middle of the song we find bagpipes-like sounds, and then we have a triumph of strongly emotive sounds.

The *titletrack* gives us groovy lines with a very basic drum machine, while vocals are in France, more up to the front this time, crawling between the sounds; and then we have misty and evocative keys, with a sum of elements in a placid songwriting, where we find suspended tensions instead of explosions.

Until the dawn starts with a clock-work sound, where ethereal vocals soon find their place, generating a nice groove ala **Depeche Mode** supported by synths and dreamy keys; a kind of musical mechanism where the game of adding is used to slowly build the structure of the song.

J'ai porté ta peau is more playful, using strange sounds and strident effects in a rumbling concert, then giving space to the voice of the singer too, while the refrains generate sudden soundwaves; as always, everything is under control and the atmosphere is never overlooked.

The work is closed by *Une promesse non tenue*, which surprises us at the start with semi experimental sounds and noise effects, full of dark lines that are intertwined with strident sounds; and then an epic upbeat effect reminds us of the more ambient oriented sound of **Trent Reznor**. Now the songwriting is crystalized by a retro synth-pop, where the mellow voice moves between the groovy sounds and the cutting effects, never forgetting strong bass lines and some piano keys; a stronger ending to the album, but that never gives in to an uncharacteristic violence.

So: a minimal synth and retro work really well crafted, which conjures at the same time a musical and thematic link between the songs and different kinds of songwriting, avoiding any kind of boring monotony; mature and competent skills are at work here, and they are the secret for avoiding what plagues many releases of this genre: the boring repetition. They give us a work that tells many stories using the music, and that has an emotive response by the listener; graduated with full scores, surely a project that deserves to be watched closely in the future.

Score: 9

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