

MDS51 – FEAR REACTOR

In the never too much overpopulated landscape of the musicians whose work is incentrated on the construction of cacophonous and distorted rhythms, there's enough space for **MDS51**, a german act already active since several years, but that only now is experiencing its absolutely more than *warholian five minutes of celebrity* thanks to the release of their most recent work, **Fear Reactor**, by the well-known **Sleepless Records Berlin**. The quite enigmatic trio, whose acronym must be interpreted as *Massive Distorted System*, whose members dress a balaclava in order to be less identifiable, use the *noise* matter, stained with a particularly obscure and thick *mood*, in order to highlight the *postmodernism* nightmare in its *orwellian* vision, so much loved by a huge number of *postindustrial* musicians.

The minimalist squared *rhythmic noise* weave, primordial engine of the eleven emanations of this album, highlights the simple as well as perfect ring of conjunction between the alienated inhabitant of the postmodern metropolis and the breathe of the machines with which he interacts in an ever increasingly deep way. There's no need, therefore, to make use of digressions and useless technical parentheses: Fear Reactor, since its *cover*, is based upon the expression of a monolithic sound, *monochrome* (to cite one of their songs), in which the physicality and the metallic coldness of the rhythm aren't self-referential, but are a thought upon the human being and his weaknesses.

Therefore, MDS51 recalls, in the *cover artwork*, the Classical sculpture, to express a comeback of the minimalist approach as well as the physicality and the strenght that the postmodernist man-victim lacks, a characteristic that is findable in the pride of the roman and greek sculpture of the Classical Art.

As far as music is concerned, although MDS51 couldn't be thought of as a particularly original act, they presents themselves, at the opposite of loads of (for some reasons) acts linkable to their sound, as a real *band*, to which, during the *live performances*, additional members are added. The use of *sampling* has a major role in trying to increase (and reaching its goal) the feeling of oppression in the listener, originated by the recursive martial and annihilating rhythms, like happens in the suffering *opener Fear reactor*, particularly minimalist rhythmic weave upon which the declamatory and distorted vocals stand out.

Likewise declamatory and martial is *Dead man thinking*, a thought upon the human being (sang in french), which sounds, as said before, refusing any kind of digression to clearly put in music the sound of the engines and that of the factories: cold, distorted, recursive, annihilating. Even *Hazardous course* shows slow rhythms, and, even thanks to its slowness, particularly oppressive and a *power electronics background* that shows no compromises, while *Pendu* highlights their more crumbling *mood*. *Encounter* feeds itself of slow rhythms and *sampling*, simple ingredients as those used in the homemade products, slowed down and even more disturbing emanation of what, twentyfive years before, was composed by **Dive** in his **First Album**, of which Fear Reactor, in some episodes, sounds like a slower and *doom* variation.

In addition to the slow and disturbing rhythms, MDS51 are capable of creating powerful and primordial mechanic-rhythmic ballets, as recognizable in the distorted *techno* of *Contact*, born inside a nuclear reactor immersed in a gloomy suburban industrial landscape, that has never seen the rays of the Sun, an ode to the formal perfection of the machine. The same recursive characteristic, the same annihilating and industrial rhythm animates *Darker*, a particularly dark episode in which humanity is only a far souvenir. The distorted vocals sing its decline. *Bloody work* is a more danceable episode, which pays a tribute to what done by Dirk Ivens years before,

mechanic ballet upon which the female voice, which lacks any kind of emotion, stands out. *Clark III* has to be considered one of the more squared and *techno-oriented* episodes of the album, made dirty by cacophony, recursive and anxious, always at the middle between rhythm, cacophony and *power electronics*-derived carpets on the *background*. An interpretation of **Grace Jones**'s *Warm leatherette* sang by a female voice closes the album, considerable the most human and *catchy* episode of the *release*, an *electro-minimalist* version of a classic tune covered by several artists, which lyrics perfectly synthesizes the MDS51 formula: *hear the crushing steel, feel the steering wheel*.

Germans MDS51 are worthy characters of a rhythmic-cacophonic current that, of the "extremism" and of the interpretation of the *ivensian*'s *less is more* philosophy have made their strenght. Fear Reactor only apparently shows itself as an easy work, in which the use of few elements is more than sufficient to express the idea, and this is what the act cares about the most. The Berlin-based label caught the point once again.

Score: 8

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<http://fluxproject.altervista.org/mds51-fear-reactor>