

SCHONWALD – BETWEEN PARALLEL LIGHTS

An year has just passed since when we've talked you for the first time about **Schonwald**, a particular italian act that has succeeded in emerging and in going out of the country's boundaries, gaining several thanksgivings in particular abroad, the best italian outcome ever in the so called minimal synth that characterized these last years.

Twelve months after **Dream for the fall**, a work that we've appreciated a lot for its songwriting skills and for its mood as well as its cold and distant electronic sounds influenced by wave music (as well as by shoegaze), the musicians show an additional ripeness with **Between parallel lights**, also this released by **Anywave Records** and **Manic Depression Records**, two labels particularly able to find talented musicians, having already demonstrated this several times.

Alessandra and Luca, *parallel lights* that have met themselves several years ago and that, from that moment on, never separated themselves, have succeeded in the uneasy result of creating a third album that wasn't a sort of appendix to the previous album, as the problem of the so called minimal synth revival, that have brought several acts to be rapidly forgotten, is that it's quite easy to repeat the same music if you're not the Ravenna-based duo, who here demonstrates to change the inner coordinates of the compositions without, for this reason, distorting the project's trademarks.

To understand this evolution, let's think about songs such as *Fury*, *Xenos* or even *Directions*. Schonwald maintain alive their synthetic and distant sound, perfect musical carpet upon which singing lyrics particularly rich of various kinds of metaphors, but what here deeply changes is the rhythmic, quite different from that used in the previous work. It's not cold 4/4 anymore as it was in the most part of Dreams for the fall's songs, but it recovers the physical and primordial dimension of an afroamerican-influenced rhythm, a sort of ritualistic one. Therefore, this is the main evolution of Schonwald's music. Here Alessandra and Luca, that previously were, in a certain sense, in their distant ivory tower, make the listeners discover the musicians walking through the forests typical of the north european countries in which they have brought their music, they *are in the forest* (the meaning of their name, Schonwald). This time, the rhythmic mirrors the steps of the standard person, not the cold drum machines's beat.

This change doesn't concern only the rhythmic, but even the vocals, here much less "distant", more physical and natural, and the guitar patterns, that literally explode, "go into reality, become physical", a thing that, before this album, wasn't so much noticeable. Therefore, *Between parallel lights* shows a more "physical", straight and concrete – at least musically – Schonwald. Let's think about *Inland*, one of the faster and more straight songs of their entire career, in particular let's hear the sound of the drums: it's a song that goes straight to the point, differently from what they've previously done in the same way.

This massive use of the guitars, an example above all the others is *Lux*, the promotional song of the album, put them more in contact with the more physical wave music, and then with **The Cure**, considered by them among their leading musical influences, although maintaining, differently from the english musicians, that particular lisergic atmosphere that characterizes them. The ungraceful guitar riffs trail themselves towards the oblivion, towards *a sun that has died*, with a rather perceivable veil of pessimism, that characterizes the whole work and that is a common trait of all their work.

The closing songs *Silver veins* and *Wall* are maybe their songs closer to the previous album's sound, songs in which the electronic sounds surely play a major role instead of the physicality of the previous songs and in which, in *Silver veins*, Alessandra's voice seems once again distant, wrapped up into an electronic fog, and Luca's guitar riffs are covered by artificial sonic layers. *Wall* is a curious "experiment" of a totally instrumental song, even this showing a more electronic approach, which leading particularity is the constant search of a particular musical climax, a really worthy ending of this album.

Between parallel lights surely represents a new, interesting milestone for the duo, in which, as well as the synergy between Alessandra and Luca, that, however, was already perceivable in their previous works, shows how the *parallel lights* that encounter themselves (as usual, the cover artwork, made by Myriam Barchecheat and Grégoir Belot, is abstract but full of meaning) are also *musical lights*: on the one hand, there's the electronic abstraction of the minimal wave, an approach that they've already experienced before, while, on the other hand, there's a strong physicality never expressed in this way before, wave-influenced, almost rock. Abstraction and concreteness that perfectly coexist together. This is the new Schonwald's approach, and we can only be proud of them.

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