

Mp3 Kent Sparling - Leaf Spring



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When organic natural sounds collide with raw electronics through analogue and glitch manipulations, these are ten of the nine billion (possible) dreamy, cloudlike, reflective and immersive results. 10 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Experimental, ELECTRONIC: Soundscapes Details: Notes from the Composer "The pieces on "Leaf Spring" are collected from experiments with Jeffrey Foster, recorded between 1997 - 2003. The majority of the work is created in the style of 'system music', where the composers create complex interplay between many simple subsystems creating or modifying sound elements. Many of the controlling elements in the systems come from unpredictable or random sources, such as microphones placed outdoors, or phototsensors under partially shaded ground below a forest canopy. These examples represent an underlying theme in my work with Jeff, which is the intersection of electronic technologies and the organic, natural world - man-made control and natural unpredictability. We set up this dialogue in both directions, where environmental sounds are modified by electronic systems, and electronic sounds are modified by the environment. In some cases we would strive to create an electronic control system whose complexity is modeled on an environmental system, be it cloud formation or water ripples. This is much more difficult than it sounds, as natural systems are often extremely complex. The pieces on "Leaf Spring" are a sonic meeting ground between the electronic man-made world and the natural world, a hybrid where the two are joined. This type of composing is at the heart of the old ideas of ambient music, where at times the pace of change within the piece is so slow as to appear static. I enjoy the meditative quality of seemingly static music - the great tradition of the drone - the 'discovery' that some aspect of the acoustic picture has shifted ever so slowly and slightly. I listen this way in nature and with music. Another interesting aspect of this kind of composing is that the elements not controlled by the composer, the environmental quotient, can occasionally produce surprises, whether in the form of sudden loud sounds,

or a wild swing outside the normal range of 'control'. Some of these surprises are met with a smile, something like a bandmember hitting a great stride during a solo, and others represent a clam, a bad note that forces us to question whether or not to stop the take. The other concept at work in "Leaf Spring" is that of the remix. The methods available to modern composers allow us to try different versions of a piece, where certain elements are emphasized, or thrown into relief during the mixing process. In fact, modern recording almost always has an additional stage of 'composition' during the mix, where the sonic identity of the work is refined. Jeff and I would create all the sonic components of a piece together, often as a live improvisation, and then I would return at a later date and mix each piece several times. Each mix becomes, in effect, a reinterpretation of the same elements, yet the mood and feel of two mixes can be strikingly different. Usually the mixing of a recording is transparent to the listener, a little-known step in the process, where nonetheless the final emotional presence of a work is created, as the "best" mix is chosen. "Leaf Spring" contains five pieces, each with two mixes. In some cases the differences are subtle, and merely represent changes in the 'arrangement' of the piece, in other cases the remix is a drastic re-visioning of the work, where parts are added, removed or shifted within to create something only distantly related to the original mixes. I've enjoyed presenting these 'sibling' mixes to listeners, and providing a window into this uniquely modern element of making music and sonic art."

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