

Mp3 Mark Mahoney - If Dreams Were Clouds



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Ambient space music rich in textures, very visual dreamy. great for meditation. 10 MP3 Songs NEW AGE: Ambient, ELECTRONIC: Ambient Details: Embark on an ethereal listening journey through spacious, lush and visually suggestive soundscapes. Restrained and unhurried, the music of Mark Mahoney's music lends itself to relaxing, reflecting and chilling out. A founding member of the ambient music group The Amaranth Signal, Mahoney uses synthesizers, samplers and field recordings to produce a distinct sound. Like dreams, his music moods migrate from playful and uplifting, to dreamily contemplative, to darkly surrealistic. Mahoney crafted each piece with a specific vision in mind. The result, like a much-needed vacation, will leave you both refreshed and invigorated. Enjoy. Review from Wind and Wire windandwire.com/apr05/if_dreams_were_clouds.htm Review by Bill Binkelman Every now and then, an ambient music artist comes to the surface who merits special mention for a unique musical vision, a special twist in the sounds he/she produces, or just because his/her recording(s) reveal a talent that is rich, interesting, and deserving of recognition without the person needing to "pay dues." Such is the case with Mark Mahoney. As part of the trio The Amaranth Signal, he had a hand in penumbra, a recording of which I wrote "...these three artists are bold voyagers into unexplored territory and hearing them get there would be a great way to spend a few hours." Now, with if dreams were clouds, Mahoney steps into the spotlight and shows his style of ambient music can stand toe-to-toe with anyone else currently in the genre (as far as I'm concerned). This is a fascinating series of drifting electronic portraits that veers from warm and ethereal, approaching the feel of classic spacemusic, to eerie and foreboding (but not necessarily dark) textural pieces that contain moments of both beauty and mystery. Mark informed me that the instrumentation on the album consisted of "...a Waldorf Q and Alesis Ion hardware synths, and Native Instruments' Reaktor and Absynth soft synths." He also incorporates (brilliantly, I might

add) some field recordings on one track ("The Apartment Ledge"). The synth sounds frequently evoke analog/classic EM comparisons, as the synths soar, cruise, whistle and careen through the night sky. I haven't heard a better "turn off the light, sit in the dark with headphones, and drift away" album in quite a while. What fascinates me, though, is how Mahoney can veer off into quasi-experimental territory here and there, not just plugging into long washes and sustained chords on synths. Take the aforementioned "The Apartment Ledge" (which opens with the sound of an "el" (i.e. elevated train) passing by amidst hushed winds and swirling synths. From these shadows, a blooping/bleeping but curiously inviting series of tones emerges and this is what cleans my clock! Suddenly, a car starts up and I can almost picture myself sitting on a window sill in a quiet Chicago neighborhood in the late night hours, absorbing the essence of life in a big city as it goes to sleep. Then there's the audacious opening track, "Desert March" (What bravado to begin an album with the longest track, as this piece runs twelve and half minutes!), with buzzing panned analog-sounding synths at the start yielding to a shuffling rhythmic percussive effect and deep swelling drones and washes. As the cut progresses, organ chords (almost cathedral-like in nature) are folded into the mix along with muted booming noises way back in the mix. There are ten selections on the album and, truthfully, each one offers listening pleasure, yet with more than enough variety to keep you interested throughout the entire length of the CD. There is "The Sentient Machine" with its computer-ish noise background effects, deep drones, and mellotron-like keyboards and "Gravitational Sling" featuring warm washes of synths underneath twinkling tones and analog whooshes. "First Light," which you might expect to be all sweetness and niceity, is actually ablaze with whirring analog chords and broad expanses of whooshing sounds, more like the spacemusic of Telomere or perhaps Michael Stearns, as well as whirling high-pitched moog-ish tones. "Third Spring" is a headphone trip with noises that sound like buzzing flies in your ears, amidst an assortment of electronic tonalities and muted arrhythmic glitch beats buried in the mix. if dreams were clouds is a CD that manages to be both soothing and also challenging and complex (without resorting to overt avant garde posturing or pointless experimentalism meant to call attention to itself). By combining retro EM and classic spacemusic elements with a contemporary view of drone, ambient, and textural music, Mahoney has created an alchemical heady brew that entices and draws you in, seducing you with warmth while bathing you in shadow. The album made its way into my Top 10 of last year and with good reason - it's bloody brilliantly conceived and executed and how it hasn't been acknowledged by more people is a puzzle. From me, it

merits "highly recommended" with ease. Here's hoping Mark Mahoney's musical voyages will continue for many years. Review by Phil Derby, 10/10/05 Electroambient Space electroambientspace.com A single white fluffy cloud on a deep sky blue background adorns the cover. The full description says "If Dreams Were Clouds: Ambient Space Music and Soundscapes by Mark Mahoney." That is a pretty good summation as well as truth in advertising. The disc opens with a long floater, the dreamy "Desert March." Long slow washes of sound roll gently along for the first three minutes. Then the music churns up a bit, adding just a bit of an edge and a semblance of rhythm. Still, the feeling is relaxed, calm. The sound rests on a comfortable middle ground between light and dark. "The Apartment Ledge" is like a restless wind at first. Angelic choirs and sparse rich bass tones add depth. A hint of melody develops toward the end, but the emphasis remains on more abstract atmospheres. "The Sentient Machine" rings out with a note that holds, fades, and repeats. Then pitch bend carries it up like a spaceship slowly rising over the horizon. Befitting the title, the electronics are predominant, more machine-like than the silky smooth tones on the preceding tracks, though it remains very much a textural piece. "Surface Water" is equally serene but a bit more structured with a soft keyboard tone rolling out a few discrete notes. The only track I have a minor quibble with is "Space Sweeper," which picks up a repeating set of bass notes at the 1:43 mark, repeating every 7 seconds until the end of its 8 minutes. I found myself distracted, listening for it instead of the surrounding atmospheric touches. But this is, again, a minor point. The whole disc evokes the feeling of letting out a deep breath slowly and fully, leaving you completely relaxed. Mark Mahoney is solid new entry in the genre of ambient space music. Review from Ben Fleury-Steiner Droning On gearsofsand.net/droningon.html "Fans of the prolific ambient artist IXOHOXI--as I surely am one of-- are sure to enjoy Mark Mahoney's first solo release, If Dreams Were Clouds. Both artists share a love for combining multiple layers of drone and rhythmic elements to create what the former accurately has called "tone poems." That is to say, loosely conceptual pieces often long and unfolding, but highly unpredictable in the way they combine synth tones, pads, rhythms, and samples. If these sounds are poems, then this is the poetry of wide reaching, open-ended verses found in the work of William Carlos Williams (I'm thinking, especially, of the free floating music that is Carlos's masterpiece "The Desert Music"). Mahoney takes an interesting departure here from his more structured work with his ambient trio, The Amaranth Signal. Whereas the latter works to create thickly ambient arcs, on If Dreams Were Clouds, Mahoney unleashes his arsenal of analog and digital tools to explore far more abstract and mysterious territories.

The opener "Desert March," opens with the airy sounds of sand cloud vapors that fold into a din of softly enveloping yet very expansive timbres. On "The Apartment Ledge" Mahoney digs into his bag of tricks combining synth sounds with the natural sounds of cars whizzing by and the sounds of telephone dial tones. Here, the listener envisions an apartment window high above the city streets; a portal that opens to a clear, endlessly black sky shimmering with stars. Another standout, and my personal favorite, is the beautifully composed "Gravitational Sling." This piece slowly drifts to life with an airy cascade of drones and twinkling under-tones and then blossoms into a gorgeous surge of sky-high propulsions--indeed, when listening through headphones one feels as though they are resting in a hammock made of clouds high above an unsuspecting cityscape. If I had one complaint with this record, I would say this: If Dreams Were Clouds does tend to over indulge a bit in its use of tried and true space ambient effects. But Mahoney's knack for adding additional, often unsuspecting layers of sweeping, twinkling, and vibrating waves keeps this set moving in an unforced, often effortless listening experience. Mahoney is also very focused on creating dream-like states in the listener as the album's other titles (i.e., "The Sentient Machine," "Space Sweeper," etc.) most certainly attest. Speaking of focused, dream-like effortlessness, the closer "Third Spring" is a wonder of organic vista-expanding drones peppered with buzzes, beeps, and sweeping undercurrents. Capturing the essence of the real as surreal--especially on the aforementioned "Gravitational Sling" and "The Apartment Ledge"--If Dreams Were Clouds takes the listener to strange and often magical places. Like all effective ambient records, Mahoney's project takes the listener to places that one enjoys being repeatedly lost in."

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