

Mp3 James Ting Aka Freaks Rendezvous - Everybody Is A Superstar



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"When Jesus walking into the Oriental psychedelic field, he can see the sound, hear the color." 12 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Pop Crossover, WORLD: Asian Details: From Hong Kong, which is in its depression, a multi-media unit 'Freaks Rendezvous' released its first album that is a set of music and visual. Freaks' style is cool and unconventional in HK music art scenes in general. At this time, Noriko Tojo, who has known Freaks Rendezvous since the unit launched, reports on Freaks Rendezvous and its works. Freaks Rendezvous is a unit organized by three Hong Kong guys and has just released its first debut album named 'Everybody is a Superstar' on Aug 20. This album contains two CDs; one music CD and one CD-Extra. It was February 1997 when they supposed and thought to release their CDs soon, I interviewed them and wrote an article about them on a Japanese magazine. And now, one and half year later, it finally comes true. The reasons why it has taken so long..., if I start writing about it, it would be a long story. Anyway, in a short, it is that their works are too far away from so called the general music in HK which means the one commercialized, and nobody, including themselves, had no idea what to do with these works. (For details, I will tell you when I get other opportunities.) I feel a bit sorry about that they had to wait for a while but honestly speaking, I think it was all right because at the end, they could release their CDs as they wished. And actually it was a good timing, I felt, they made their debut when the time was ripe. Why? Because these CDs have potentials to pep up the HK music scene which has been sluggish for while. The strange name (in Chinese) of this unit 'Yi Yan Man Jeun Gun' (Freaks Rendezvous as English name) was made with twisting a Chinese word 'Mou Yan Man Jeun' (nobody comes to see)', members say. 'Yi Yan' for this unit name means 'strange people &/or people like strange things' and 'Yi Yan Man Jeun Gun' can be interpreted as 'The place where strange guys come

together.' In other words, the core members of Freaks Rendezvous are three guys but actually numbers of Yi Yan (Freaks) who are also uniquely talented joined to produce this album. It's Freaks Rendezvous' basic attitude to create their works through stimulation with these other Freaks. So, Freaks Rendezvous' album is fundamentally different from those HK idols CDs which producers, managers and other creators usually do most of works and the idols themselves have not much to involve. Also, they put efforts on MTV that has been treated like a by-product of music. As the result, they came up with the style of this album, which contains two CDs as one set; one is music and another is CD-Extra that has a game like interface. Since this album was released from Sony Music, I tend to write about it with focusing on music but I could say that this album is about cool visual with cool music, as well. Anyhow it's not the same kind of MTV with traditional HK MTV that the singer acts melodrama in. Freaks Rendezvous' catch copy is 'See the sound, Hear the colour'. The way of their expression that is the fusion of music and visual, has not been so common in HK yet, and I believe it's suitable for the unit name 'Yi Yan Man Jeun Gun'. Now, let me introduce members of Freaks Rendezvous. James Ting (=Dr.Panquix) is in charge of music. He started his career as a professional composer from 1994. Since that time till now, he has composed songs for major HK singers such as Ekin Cheng, Eedmond Leung, Sammi Cheng and so on. (By the way, Sammi Cheng's last year hit song 'Everyone is a superstar' was not which Freaks Rendezvous copied but Sammi's producer who was inspired by James' demo version of 'Everybody...' and named for Sammi's one.) The characteristics of James's music is 'seductive' (as he described) melody line which reminds the atmosphere of 60s 70s Japanese Pop music. This style is applied to Freaks Rendezvous' works and appears very well on 'Black Lizard' (7th song) in the album. For the visual parts, Chan Kahing (=DaDi) and Yong Gwok Yin (=E-Yin) are in charges. DaDi, who admires Dali since the time he studied painting in Canada, has chosen 3D Computer Graphic to express his world. He has received many prizes from various contests. And he received the special prize in HK independent film contest for the MTV of "Daai Lou Nei Seong Dim Ma?"* which is also in this album. This MTV was shown in overseas as well. E-Yin was used to be one of many 'Yi Yan' as supporting stuffs of Freaks Rendezvous but because of his high design sense and object making ability, he became an official member of this unit. For two years from 1992, he operated a small shop named 'Art Music' where also provided live music. In this shop, he dealt independent label CDs and books, which were not easy to get in HK by that time and clothes he designed. And this shop was the place where James, DaDi and E-Yin got to know each other. Well, I

should introduce about the album itself as well. First of all, the music CD contains different style of music such as dance music, hard core techno, trip pop, military song(?!) etc..... It seems a bit puzzled but with listening one after another, you will get the theme of this album is 'Chaos and Rebirth'. In a broad sense, it's about the present time that is the transition time from the end of the 20-century to the 21-century. In a familiar case, it's the current state of Hong Kong which has got mixed up after the collapse of the bubble economy. "Daai Lou Nei Seong Dim Ma?" (4 &5 in CD) is exactly the thing. In the following song (6 in CD) 'Da Siu Yan(old women curse upon your request)' is appeared, as if begging God to help. If you could understand Cantonese, you would be shocked. For the visuals in CD-Extra, the chaos is stressed more and full of their own humors such as 'the Auto-Da Siu Yan Machine'. 'Da Siu Yan' means old pray women who appear places like under overpasses on the certain days. 'Da Siu Yan' put a curse on the person whom the customer asks with writing name of the person to be cursed on a piece of paper and hit it with a shoes or a sandal. It costs about 100-200HK\$. It was already surprising enough to know such a primitive magic ritual still existed but I was even more astonished when I saw a long queue of women after their works waiting for their turns with Da Siu Yan under the overpass in Causeway Bay. In the world of Freaks Rendezvous, this curse ritual becomes much more convenient. With a coin, 'the Auto-Da Siu Yan Machine' curses for you. A while ago, I asked them which artists they were interested in. Then they gave me names of Mishima Yukio, Terayama Syuji, Umezu Kazuo and so on. For the common sense in Hong Kong, grotesque and erotic worlds seen in these artists' works are taboo. Members of Freaks Rendezvous show strong interest to express complex inner states of human beings, as if they challenge to the taboo. How they mix their dry sensibility as young generation today and erotic grotesque will be the point worthy of note. At the last, the music production team of Freaks Rendezvous bases at Toronto, Canada because James has his main studio in there. Therefore most of songs in this album 'Everybody is a superstar' were composed in Canada and also many of musicians worked together for this album lived in there. Since there are many immigrants from HK live in Canada, it seems that HK people don't feel too much distance for there. In fact, James and DaDi completed music and MTV for "Daai Lou Nei Seong Dim Ma?" through talking on the phone. For the future, since Canada is a multiracial country, they are planing of collaboration works with artists not only overseas Chinese but also others. I'm looking forward to see what will be born from the mix of East and West. Based on the common sense in Hong Kong, the word 'unconventional' fits Freaks Rendezvous pretty well. Again, Hong Kong, the whole society, is in its

depression now. Music scene can't find a way out of the dull business of idols. So, it's going to be really fun, because of Freaks Rendezvous, younger talented people start expressing themselves and breathe new lives into not only music scene but also all art scenes. I look forward to see the future and further Freaks Rendezvous.

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