

Mp3 Agency-x - Mission Impossible



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Swedish/American synthpop: recall percolating Kraftwerkian music meets 80s pop soul. 10 MP3 Songs
POP: New Wave POP: 80's Pop Mission Out of the question Songs Details: Last year's debut individual
from Agency-X, "Don't Hold Your Breath," was an hole-and-corner hit in synthpop clubs from San
Francisco to Sweden. This April, Agency-X serves up Mission Out of the question, the full-length
follow-up. It's an album of love songs: recall percolating Kraftwerkian music meets 80s pop soul.
Agency-X consists of two operatives, San Francisco-based singer/songwriter/producer davidmahr and
Swedish keyboardist/composer Lars Wallden. With influences spanning the history of synthesizer
music-from 80s synthpop to eurodisco and back-the duo's mutual electronica obsessions merge
flawlessly on their debut album, despite the fact that the band mates have never met in person. This
deliciously danceable music is the fruit of an organic synthesis that begins online, of all places. The band
mates work separately in studios in San Francisco and the commercial port town of Karlshamn, Sweden,
and trade music files over the Internet. Introduced electronically by a mutual friend (a DJ and promoter of
the SYNTHCON music conference), the two began collaborating in 2001 after discovering, through email
and IM conversations, a common worship of 80s synthpop demigod Vince Clarke (founder of Depeche
Mode, Yazoo, and Erasure). Agency-X was born when, in a three-hour fit of pure inspiration, davidmahr
wrote and arranged vocals for a demo piece that Wallden had ICQ'd over-which became the individual
"Don't Hold your Breath." The band's first release also included a remake of "Walk Away From Love,
"originally recorded for the Ninthwave Records compilation of 2002 Nobody's Diary: A Tribute to Yazoo.
Agency-X's front man, davidmahr, is widely recognized among synthpop illuminati as one of the freshest
voices on the scene. His solo music fondly recalls the past-years spent listening to the new-wave sounds
of Bronski Beat, Yaz, Thompson Twins, and Pet Shop Boys-while embracing newer elements of dance

and house music. Solo projects released on his own Delicious Records label include 1997's No Drama! and 1999's Lost Found albums as well as the three-song EP Only You, featuring the title Yazoo cover track and the international club hit "Sugar Candi (What You Mean to Me)." Not much is known about the reclusive Lars Wallden, the keyboard-programming mastermind behind Agency-X. He is best known for keeping alive the machine-made, Clarke-influenced sound with his Swedish synthpop band AvantGarde, which he started in 1990. Wallden lives with two daughters on the south coast of Sweden, where he continues to record with AvantGarde and also works the nightshift at a Volvo components factory. So how do an openly gay man in San Francisco and a straight man in Sweden write love songs together? In the case of "Catch Me," davidmahr put Wallden's tale of meeting and falling for a woman named Katrin into song. But when he sings "Oh Katrin, won't you catch me and fall in love? Let's go hand-in-hand - let's see the world together..." he imagines Katrin as a man, explaining with a smile, "Love is love." He continues: "Writing a love song really is about understanding what that particular person is going through, the emotions being felt. I certainly know how happy and goofy I felt when I first fell in love with my partner of 8 years. In fact, the songs on this album speak to so many emotions that are universal - love and happiness, of course, but also fear, insecurity, loss, and finally, hope." The songs are full of double and hidden meanings. In "At the End of the Day" when the singer asks, "Have you ever had the kind of love that drives you insane?" The answer, "In a happy way, it's a happy day, oh yeah," somehow makes perfect sense. Other lyrics are more direct: "All is quiet on the western front, my mind tries to say - but my heart says something else - Why did you have to die?" The album turns out to be a collection of tales based on the adventures of two "secret" agents searching for love and the meaning of life, just like the rest of us. On this mission, the specifics of any relationship are less important than the common experiences of joy, sadness, loss, regret, redemption, and finally, hope: "Looks like the mission is finally over. Floating here amongst the wreckage...Come find me, I'm worth saving." The bouncy electro beats and lush vocal arrangements on Mission Out of the question deliver pop perfection with a bittersweet complexity that emerges over repeated listening. Agency-X joins forces in cyberspace-the ultimate expression of human isolation-but traverses the landscape of the heart in search of understanding. Deceptively sweet and light, Mission Out of the question is a satisfying meal for body and soul.

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