

Mp3 Amongst Myselfs - The Sun In The Bottle



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new age electronic 11 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Ambient, NEW AGE: New Age Details: Personal Reflections of "The Sun in the Bottle" Looking back at The Sun in the Bottle (TSITB) I remember that it was more a catalyst to start recording the musical ideas I had piling up. To release them on CD as a form that I felt finalises them instead of them lying on the computer being constantly worked and changed. All my work is done on computer and I have a folder with all my uncompleted works contained within. I have tracks that suit the style of TSITB more than my more recent releases that date back to the late 80s which I still load up, listen to and "fiddle" with. It's such an annoying distraction most of the time but every now and then I open something up and think "that bit sounds interesting I might sneak that into what I'm working on at the moment". So what's it like to listen to TSITB now ? I still really like it. The opening track Before Now sticks out like a sore thumb. This is something I did after getting my first Future Sound of London album "Dead Cities" of which I believe helped me with the confidence in releasing non-popular music. It's my first track to be quite dark. Using that Avant Garde formula to create a perception of horror or fear and shock through discordant tones and large dynamic range changes. Quite a short track really - I hadn't quite learnt the benefit of the longer track that gives the listener time to change their mind set. Nicely sparse track which is something I could learn from as I find myself cluttering tracks too often on my later works. The second track on the album is Scylla's Battle which continues the dark theme but also the more melodic tracks that I was primarily writing at the time. I had just come through a stage in my life where I was earning decent money and I could finally start buying studio gear. I was buying cards for the computer but not actual synths as they were and still are really expensive but the emergence of synths on computer card was well and truly happening. As I mentioned some of these tracks go back to the late 80s where the bedroom musician had to be a millionaire bedroom musician. It was still really expensive. Up

until now I had be using an several borrowed 8 track machines which were not the greatest to work with. But come the mid to late 90's and I started to notice affordable audio gear for the computer. Also affordable computer power was getting to the point where you could use it as a multi-track audio recorder. My first multi-track card was an Echo Audio Darla which I bought when I sold my beloved Roland SH-5 analogue synth. I still regret selling the SH-5 but knew somewhere down the line I would get myself a modular synth so I wasn't totally devastated. Scylla's Battle is a real death march. The pace is too slow to be an advancing, strong army but more the slaughter of the remaining few. Urban Desert starts the rising from the ashes lamenting theme - third age of things to come. The track develops and introduces a beat at a leisurely pace that's really nice and easy. The title reflects the scene well. It's the idea that large cities appear as lifeless deserts to outsiders. Deserts also appear quite desolate to many people but they generally contain substantial amounts of unique lifeforms. To Wish Impossible Things I think is a great track - people like this track off the album mostly as it's easy to identify with - very accessible to the average listener. It's written by The Cure. It started with me playing with the main backing track on the piano. I often sit at the piano and play around with tunes and ideas and transfer them onto the computer and explore other sounds. Essentially it isn't that different from the Cure version just an instrumentation change but I really good one I think. The fret-less bass works really well. You can tell it's me playing a real one because of the slight tuning mistakes. But it adds to the realism. Having old friends Alison and Llara sing on the track works so well. One technical thing that was really interesting about this track is the vocals were recorded on a Yamaha CBX-D5 which was my biggest purchase to date and still is (though I sold it for a couple hundred dollars a few years ago). It never really worked properly. I don't think I actually used it to record much else as it was so much of a head ache to get it to work. It was invented for use with computers and worked with Macs, Atari STs and also PCs. It didn't actually use the computer to do the recording or the processing but you connected it to the computer and a shared external harddrive. The computer was just a user interface for it. It was quite limited in a modern sense but it was a 4 track digital recorder. It had a couple of Yamaha SPX900 effects processors inside it which was a great benefit. It's real problem was that it only worked with Cubase Audio on a PC and only with Windows 3.11. You could get it to work with later Windows if you bought a \$200 upgrade for the unit. It's gone to a good home now. I bought the Echo Audio Darla card in the late 90's which alongside a fast PC could do numerous more tracks and without computers crashing after every second take. Pale Blue Dot sounds a

bit Alan Parson's Project as I listen to it now. It was the start of my celebration of the cosmologist Carl Sagan. I never realised that he was such a celebrity in the US. Living in Australia, Carl Sagan was this guy who hosted a science series on public TV called "Cosmos" which I watched religiously. I had always really enjoyed science especially electronics and astronomy. I looked forward to studying the area at high school but a set of bad teachers put me off the area totally. It took Carl Sagan's "Cosmos" to get me back into science and to this day still enjoy re-reading his books and of course exploring electronics and astronomy. "Pale Blue Dot" is a small tribute to him and the Voyager project. First Woman on Lysithea is another dark track. It's about the last few minutes of my mother's life as she was dying of cancer related illness. The steady background sequence from one of Bach's preludes leads her through the final stages of life. She approaches her Eden with a big crescendo from the orchestra and as mission control announces her arrival the constant beeping of her heart stops. She is at rest and the pain has gone. Passing the Sword Handle of Orion is a nice way of coming out of the emotion drain of the previous track. It lifts you up and gently takes you to somewhere where happy memories bring back the joy of life. A simple track that is something I plan to re-create and integrate for a new mix album in the near future. Moxam's Stars is probably my favourite track on this album. An orchestral piece that I would love to refine and have performed by a full orchestra one day. It's inspired by the modern Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe. His work is also inspired by the Australian desert landscape. The night time skies in desert Australia have to be the clearest in the world. One wonderful trip I made in the summer of 1993 to the far north of South Australia - we stayed in the one roomed Moxam's Hut. What A Day (Beyond Mt. Blue) sounds like an Enya track. I bought her Watermark album when it was released which at the time I thought was great. I can't quite remember why she was such a hit at the time maybe it was because here was a very attractive and un-threatening woman who could write and play good music. I suppose the place where she failed is that everything she writes sounds like the same one track to me. She needs some lessons from Bjork who I believe to be one of the great modern women composers who explores all possibilities and makes it acceptable in popular music. Medindie Shudder was an experiment with a different timing signature with a sort of ethno-jazz influence. At the time I was mystified with dance music - I wanted anything other than a 4/4 time signature. And finally the last track To Wish goes against everything I said about dance music and 4/4 time signatures. Well it all happened in the heat of the moment really. If I didn't do something in the dance genre it would all be over by the time I come up with

something - how wrong I was about that. So in summing up "The Sun in the Bottle" - it was the starting post of exploration into my musical expression that seems so long ago and so different to where I am now. Steve Roberts - August 2006 People who are interested in should consider this download.

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