

IF NOT, WINTER

tobias c. van Veen and tomas phillips | LP

1. exposure.to.ATTK – 11:23
2. flesh.ode.to.EM – 8:42
3. if not, winter – 35:45
4. koan.for.CP – 3:33

total.time: 59:29

Liner Notes:

{ tracks 1,2 and 4 by tobias c. van Veen, recorded 84 studio hours at Steim, Amsterdam, 09.09-16.03 / www.steim.nl }

{ track 3 by tobias c. van Veen and tomas phillips, recorded 03.06.04 at deep/listening event }

{3 INTERVENTIONS OF EXPOSED FLESH: TRACKS 1, 2, 4

Four stolen bodies, dragged, into the light, to be wounded, unjustly, and exposed. A ternary of charges. Cries and pleas muffled. Ties and bonds struck into place. The bound body does not move. It lays exposed. Here I am. Here she is. "The exposed self does not reveal a secret self that has been hidden, but rather dissolves any self that could be apprehended" (MH). Each layer sliced with an exquisite touch. Each layer peeled back as the ground heaves its dusk at the feet of thieves. Immobile, I lie in wait for the evening, and I lie with you. }

{IF NOT, WINTER: TRACK 3

The tea and the boiling. Fragments of Sappho. Is it ready to serve? Line.down. Time for tea? The plan hasn't decided anything here. }

tV[thx]: to the executioners & lovers, to smooth & flat things, a series of initials: WC|PK|FH|PA|theVV|&4079, to Cthulu, who stays where he should be [25.03.05].

tp[thx]: Stephen Shelton, drummer.

both[thx]: Winston Phillips, for the rugs; to every single exceptional audience member.

It's the sound...

It's the sound of water and grey skies and steel grey and wind and the calm before wind, before storms and clouds so black and low that they seem to press down on things, exert pressure, make things smaller and stronger and sharper and more deeply felt. It's the sound of rain and storms and turbulence masked and rain and rain and rain so hard that it's on the edge, that it's almost there, it's almost coming, but it never arrives fully, never comes down so hard that it shatters everything into oblivion, pulverizes with its cadence, liquefies with its force; dissolves. But it's almost this sound, this rain. An almost that's never quite, that's not quite, an almost that's always an almost; an almost always on the edge of becoming. And perhaps that's what it's a sound of: of becoming, of a becoming, of many becomings, of the edge, the cusp, the almost, the potential, the possibility. Perhaps. But it's a sound that always brings me back to water, to images of water that flood my mind. Of waves and wind-lashed waters, of glassy surfaces and seething eddies, of the ancient pelagic currents of the ocean deeps that move almost as stone beneath the weighty pressure of the sea. Of rain that comes down like veils to shade the surface of things, concealing forests and islands, covering distances, falling over layers of land closer and closer as it beats down harder and harder, and I never wanted it to end, wanted it to come down so hard that I couldn't even see my own hand held up before my face, could see nothing of myself, would be lost, would disappear, would dissolve in its wetness and its hardness and its force. But it never came hard enough, never arrived at a point that would meet my satisfaction, was always approaching, and even in this approaching it was never sustained, never lasted long enough: if it came down hard, it would barely last thirty brief seconds, let alone a minute, let alone an hour.

[and in between I was in an arctic land, I lay down on the snow and gazed up at the sky and the stars shimmered and quivered and fanned out into ribbons that danced before me and wound around me and touched the surface of the snow with a magnetic, electric crackling, like the sound of footsteps in the snow—that beautifully dampened crunch of feet pressing into ice—like that sound amplified a thousand times and writ large across the sky. And as the dance of the northern lights illuminated that arctic landscape I laid myself down in the snow and cried]

A world of before that are now but never now, so close, so near and yet so far distant, too far distant, painfully far distant. The pain that now always accompanies beauty, that finds its most intensely unbearable expression in beauty, that is the pain that now always haunts me: the painfully beautiful sound of a world without my sister in it, a world that can still harbour beauty, still produce beauty, still go on as if nothing had changed, as if nothing were missing, as if her death were nothing...

- Heather Pokotylo