



CAMOUFLAGE - GREYSCALE



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Tracklisting:

1. Shine
2. Laughing
3. In The Cloud
4. Count On Me
(Featuring Peter Heppner)
5. Greyscale (CD version only)
6. Still
7. Misery
8. Leave Your Room Behind
9. Light Grey
10. If... (CD version only)
11. End Of Words
12. Dark Grey
13. I'll Find

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We write the year 2015. One retro wave follows the next. Synth-Pop is bigger than ever. All around the world, current productions reference the sound that emerged from pre-reunification Germany. So where are the originals – the bands and artists of that time – today? Many can be found doing the rounds at eighties parties held by local radio stations. Others are investing the royalties from their back catalogues in the cultivation of organic vegetables.

Not so for Camouflage. That's right – THE Camouflage – the masters of sadness dressed up in electronic songs. The band flitted directly from the small German town of Bietigheim-Bissingen all the way to the United States in 1987 with "The Great Commandment". Their music brilliantly combined the icy coolness of Kraftwerk, the pop of OMD and the melancholy gloom of Depeche Mode. Yet the temptation to indulge in nostalgia has always remained very faint with this band. So it's no surprise that Camouflage now emerge with "Greyscale" – a strikingly current and compelling album, both musically and lyrically.

Flashback: Heiko Maile, Oliver Kreyszig and Marcus Meyn were schoolboys with synthesizers and a keen ear for the musical zeitgeist. It was a world dominated by fears and apocalyptic scenarios, non-aggression pacts and embargoes, ruled by old men and one woman. The Cold War was almost over, the Berlin Wall was still standing. It was in this landscape that Camouflage unleashed their music: driving, demanding and so beautifully sad in its invitation to lose oneself in eternity while dancing. The band found success on both sides of the Atlantic with their debut album "Voices & Images". In the U.S.A. the record even went to number one on the Billboard Dance Charts. The follow-up "Methods of Silence" docked seamlessly onto this momentum, and with the single "Love Is A Shield" they created a gem of a hit that still graces dance floors and radio stations worldwide.

A lot has happened on our planet since then, and the band has travelled a long path that was anything but straightforward. In the nineties they played with styles and producers and experimented. With "Areu Areu", they founded a publisher for obscure music. Even an opera project was terrifically driven into a brick wall. For Camouflage, these were in equal measure both artistically important as well as financially disastrous processes. The record companies, meanwhile, placed their bets on other horses that could chase the trends faster. That's show business, thought the band before dusting themselves off and continuing undeterred in making records and touring the world from Russia to Mexico, steadily expanding their fan base all the while.



In 2003 Camouflage released “Sensor”, a dark and punchy work demonstrating that they had not slept through the eras, but could still prove their relevance in the new millennium with their sound and their songs. In 2006 followed the album “Relocated”, and the band went on a tour that included Asia and South America.

2011 saw the first work on an album which right from the beginning of the development process was entitled “Greyscale”. Heiko Maile, Oliver Kreyssig and Marcus Meyn knew early on that the music on this record should offer something to counter the drab realities of our time, with its clouds and fog, the endlessly repeating greyness. They were more than successful in this accomplishment. Now, after many long days of work, they proudly present their eighth studio album to the public.

The music on “Greyscale” sounds expansive and atmospheric, yet is simultaneously compelling and tight. Once again responsible for the production is Heiko Maile, who has enjoyed success as a film music composer (for films such as “Die Welle” and “Wir sind die Nacht”) for several years now. Stylistically confident, he contrasts electronic elements, guitars, sonic experimentation and beats with acoustic instruments, such as the string ensemble of the Babelsberg Film Orchestra. Great support for the musicality and sound of the album came from renewed collaboration with two of the band’s most loyal companions: Volker Hinkel (guitar, production) and Jochen Schmalbach (production, mixing), both of whom have been involved with Camouflage over many years, as part of the live band and all other activities.

In “End Of Words” there is even a children's choir, which sounds as if Kubrick himself set it in scene. It's nothing less than cinematic! The record sounds modern, yet Camouflage always maintain the connection to their own original sound, for which they became famous. The beats and basses, synth arpeggios and pads all reveal their unmistakable fingerprint, equally as characteristic as the touchingly poignant voice of singer Marcus Meyn.

The songs on “Greyscale” have one eye on the club and the other on the heart. Camouflage can inspire dancing, crying and contemplation in equal measure. The single “Shine” starts off small with an 808-beat, then over the course of four minutes it climbs to dizzying heights with strings, choirs and a vocal hook that could not sound more unironic and honest. Marcus Meyn begins with the lines:

“This is the story,
we should shout out loud,
tell everybody,
that no one lives without:
Shine Shine Shine
within your mind.”

There is plenty to despair about every day, but we must always hold on to the ability to radiate from the inside out. More light = more joy in life. It's that simple! The highly danceable “Misery” sings of the purifying effect of the misery and pain that love can inflict. “End Of Words” is both lyrically and musically the melancholy heart of the album. It portrays the grey clouds that we carry within us, and images of the past and present that weigh us down and sometimes leave us speechless. And as if to underline this statement, the dreamy instrumental “Dark Grey” follows directly. “In The Cloud” addresses the fear – in the midst of work, appointments and deadlines – of missing out on the life that had originally been intended.

That is one of the great qualities of this music: Camouflage is not just some superficial band that bases its existence on churning out dance stompers and love songs. Their music and lyrics touch on nothing less than the big questions of our time.

Hope is also a theme. “Count On Me” is a declaration of unconditional love. Here Marcus Meyn shares the vocals with Peter Heppner of Wolfsheim. Together they sing:

“the truth will set me free,
I can always count on you,
as you can always count on me.”

You can also count on the band Camouflage. They refuse to stand still. They do not live in the past. With “Greyscale” they have created a beautiful, powerful piece of music for the here and now – about ourselves and our lives. Thanks for that!