



AUTOMAT

PLUSMINUS

CD / vinyl (incl. CD) / download
Release date: May 29, 2015



“When, in the year 1913, in my desperate attempt to free art from the ballast of objectivity, I took refuge in the square form and exhibited a picture which consisted of nothing more than a black square on a white field. The critics and, along with them, the public sighed, Everything which we loved was lost. We are in a desert ... Before us is nothing but a black square on a white background! But the desert is filled with the spirit of non-objective feeling ...”
— **Kazimir Malevich**

Anyone who endeavors to free music from the weight of things inevitably lands at Dub—the analog mother of all minimalist pop species. The studio as a black cube, which devours all that is dispensable or banal. Rhythm and sound are more important than melodies. And repetition reveals itself as a form of change—if only because the focus gravitates to the small yet important details.

Under this premise, the Berlin-based trio Automat has now recorded an exceptional album. Denser and yet even more unflinching than the debut they released one year ago, PLUSMINUS recalls the mysterious monolith in Stanley Kubrick’s “2001”. There’s nothing here that one could hold onto, and yet so much of it that the listener is transported into a kind of trance.

While its predecessor was still characterized by prominent guest vocalists like Lydia Lunch, Blixa Bargeld and Genesis P-Orridge, here it is the studio that speaks. It is the 1950s analog technology of Candy Bomber Studios in Berlin-Tempelhof. Automat recorded all the tracks on the album within three days in January. Without much rehearsal, the first take was final—limitation as strength.

Almost all the tracks on the album are named after the sonic devices and effects units that were the focus during production: “EMT 140” is a two meter long reverb plate, “H 910” is a harmonizer that defined the sound of David Bowie’s “Low”. The Automat musician Zeitblom had been searching for this unit for ten years. His perseverance paid off.

The thunderous bass lines, delirious rhythms and hypnotic sounds of PLUSMINUS make the notion of categories and genres seem superfluous. Of course, we are not dealing with classic dub reggae here. And the Detroit Techno of musicians such as Terrence Dixon is another story. Yet oscillating between these poles is a music that even draws from jazz and other genres without compromising its autonomy.

One can follow this development on the preceding productions, a split single with Schneider TM and an EP with Max Loderbauer. But with PLUSMINUS, Automat has succeeded in creating their interim masterpiece.

Jürgen Ziemer

Automat is: **Jochen Arbeit** (Einstürzende Neubauten, Die Haut), **Achim Färber** (Project Pitchfork, Prag, Philipp Boa), **Georg Zeitblom** (Sovetskoe Foto)



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Tracklisting:

1. Mono
2. RE 201
3. Achtung
4. H 910
5. Plus Minus
6. DMX 15-80 S
7. SST 282
8. EMT 140