



## VA Gespensterland

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CD / LP / digital



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Over the last ten years a strange mycelium was sprouting from the ground of Germany's sound topography, going widely unnoticed while creeping its way up through the copse of the ubiquitous "Neo-Kraut", "Diskurs-Pop" and the like. We're talking about a small underground network of artists and projects with poetic, mysterious names such as Brannten Schnüre, Baldrin, Kirschstein, Freundliche Kreisel and Balint Brösel. Operating in the margins and intersections of folklore, experimental electronics, dreams and nightmares, the "Gespensterland" LP archives and compiles their magic works for the very first time and already today it stands as a contemporary testament with an auratic presence comparable to that of Pordenone's "Great Complotto".

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"Deutschland – Gespensterland": they're lurking in each and every crack of a brittle reality, amongst the concrete of apartment blocks and motorway bridges, twixt and tween the shopping mall and the leisure park, they're floating along gap sites and post-war facades, apricating in the ludicrous snobbery of Germany's suburbia, whispering from behind crammed sheds in a labyrinth of allotments. Gossamer ghosts spun from daily rituals, spectres of a mundane here and now, that suffuse the land with an invisible veiling. Hardly ever have their frequencies been transmitted as unadulterated as on this record. Much like the fever dream imagery of gothic novels and early horror flicks has equipped our senses with a new perception of reality itself, Gespensterland's surreal songs and oblique sound textures yield an array of microscopic reflections and deeper insights into the psychogeography of the land.

Raised in Lower Franconia, both Baldrin and Brannten Schnüre already have a considerable discography under their belt. A string of vinyl and cassette releases issued in lovingly designed small runs contributed to their underground fame, securing them a distinguished but growing cult following, especially abroad. Due to their rather brief or latent existence, the legacy of Balint Brösel and Kirschstein, hailing from the Ruhr area, however is of a more obscure nature. Hence, it's all the more important that their fascinating and idiosyncratic skein of ghost musick is being documented here as well, emerging like a seldom ore that slumbered too long inside the earth, having accumulated the collective dreams of generations of necromancers. Ghosts stories, both uncanny and hilarious, are likewise the main ingredient of Freundliche Kreisel's songs, a joint project of Brannten Schnüre and Baldrin, and as with all material on this record these tracks have been unreleased to date.

For as much as these bands differ in their respective sonic approach, “Gespensterland” can still be considered as a cipher for a shared cosmos and a mutually found aesthetic language. It is always a similar sentiment of a slightly disconnected, shifted and delayed reality that manifests itself in Brannten Schnüre’s wistful and whimsical ambient-folk loops, the evocative and rhythmic poltergeist interludes of Baldruin, the sweet and naïve C86-jangle of Balint Brösel, Kirschstein’s rhenish mutant-NDW and post-kraut-romanticism and the electro-acoustic séances of Freundliche Kreisel. Think of it as a rampant yearning, a manic laughter, but mostly as a feeling of some somnambulistic thirst for adventure and journeys into the unknown, a feeling that is grounded deep inside the heart of the continent. We imagine, this is the music of a few like-minded recluses, sitting alone at night in their chambers, immersing themselves in the darkest and innermost Tibet of their own work.

It’s not too far-fetched either to read “Gespensterland” as a contribution to a specifically German response to Mark Fisher’s hauntologic theories. In every track, the fancy of an abandoned future uncoils a narrative thread that has long been discontinued, a dream vision that remained unredeemed forever, now haunting the dull grey corridors of the post-historic presence. These songs glimmer and shine with moods and stories that draw their tension from the same force fields that once gave rise to Alfred Kubin’s demonic visions, Hans Henny Jahn’s nightmarish “Night of Lead” or the bizarre adventures of Baron Muenchhausen. And yet, it is not the spectres of the past that are being summoned or dealt with here, but instead the quotidian, perpetually recurring disintegration of reality that lies within the close encounter with one’s own unfamiliarity: “is this my hand, or is it someone else’s?”.

Margot Benetti, Walpurgis 2023

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### **Artist - Track**

01. Freundliche Kreisel - Gespensterland
  02. Kirschstein - Komet über Sch(r)attenberg
  03. Baldruin - Reich der Illusionen
  04. Kirschstein - Ach, Du große Nachtmusik
  05. Freundliche Kreisel - Abbild
  06. Baldruin - Elektrische Kräuter
  07. Kirschstein - Futura Narkotica
  08. Brannten Schnüre - Ich versäum‘ doch nichts
  09. Kirschstein - Mouches Volantes oder die tanzenden Mücken in den kristallinen Gebilden des Menschauges
  10. Kirschstein - Gold der Liebe
  11. Brannten Schnüre - Supermarkt
  12. Freundliche Kreisel - Spannung
  13. Baldruin - In heimlichen Winkeln
  14. Balint Brösel & Brannten Schnüre - Disco
  15. Freundliche Kreisel - Entwirklichung
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### **Promotion**

**Sean Newsham**

+49(0)40-88166663  
sean@bureau-b.com  
www.bureau-b.com

**BB436**

**CD** 243432  
4015698579208  
**LP** 243431  
4015698847772