



SORBET

This Was Paradise

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Irish producer Chris W Ryan (Just Mustard, NewDad and his own Robocobra Quartet) began releasing music under the moniker SORBET in 2020 with the express intention to cleanse the palate; both for the listener and himself.

Spending much of his time in the studio with other artists, Chris took inspiration from producer-led albums like Brian Eno's *Another Green World*: "I love the way you can hear the playful interaction between friends on an album like that -- there are none of the constraints or rules that you might have when you're trying to represent the sound of a live band or artist".

Exploring freely across genre bounds, the world of SORBET is informed by electronic music just as much as classical and alt-pop, with nods to artists like Laurie Anderson, Arthur Russell, Kate Bush and David Byrne.

Inspired by this freedom of creativity, the debut SORBET album *This Was Paradise* features a host of collaborators orbiting around Chris' nucleus, in which he flexes his ability as a composer and technician in equal measure: "It's all the same to me: producing beats, writing lyrics, drawing up sheet music for classical musicians, EQ'ing snare drums - I'm just using everything I can to create something exciting to listen to".

These collaborations include vocal features from Maija Sofia, Mark McCambridge (Arborist) and Micheál Keating (Bleeding Heart Pigeons) as well as powerful instrumental performances from musicians working in the jazz and classical world poached by Chris. "There are so many great musicians on this record, some of which I've been friends with years and others that I've been admiring for a while and itching to work with like jazz saxophonist Lara Jones and upright bass player Jack Kelly".

These two musicians feature on lead single *I Heard His Scythe*, a song which slices through the despair with an Optimistic Nihilism that is central to the record. Featuring a musical backing that nods to Kate Bush's *Watching You Without Me* alongside Maija Sofia's airy refrain rebutting the grim reaper - "I heard his scythe whoosh past my ear / it gets a little louder every year".

All of this sonic looseness is bound tightly by the concept behind *This Was Paradise*: A rumination on humanity's precarious position in a living Purgatory. "We're stuck between Paradise and Hell, always swinging between the two as a result of how we behave towards each other and our planet. For example, climate change is sliding us towards an almost literal Hell"

This duality is represented in the binary use of electronic and acoustic instruments, especially in the case of album closer *Hell* – a recording split right down the middle between a string quartet and four synthesisers.

"Aesthetically I wanted to hang in the balance of electronic and acoustic composition: between the natural world and humanity's imprint on it".

Therein lies the central theme of *This Was Paradise* – an album littered with references to Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* which opens with Adam being expelled from the Garden of Eden for "Man's first disobedience and the fruit of that forbidden tree".

The final lyrics of SORBET's debut album exclaim the words "This was paradise / It was nice." Though it seems like a statement of finality, the strangely carefree tone indicates that we ought to make the most of the time between now and the end.

Tracklisting

1. (Paradise)
2. Only For The Young (feat. Arborist)
3. The Candle
4. (Purgatory)
5. Beaming Signals
6. Born Purple (feat. Mickykiatein)
7. I Heard His Scythe (feat. Maija Sofia)
8. Kettle Boil (Disobedience)
9. The End Of Time
10. (Hell)



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