

Hard-Wired Goth Review

Home

Review ratings:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. Avoid | 6. Not Bad |
| 2. Poor | 7. Good |
| 3. Weak | 8. Very Good |
| 4. Worth The Effort | 9. Excellent |
| 5. Shows Promise | 10. Must Have |

Artist

Beyond Sensory Experience

Title

No Lights In Our Eyes

Format/Cat

CMI182

Label

Cold Meat Industry

Style

dark ambient

Date of review

23 May 2008

Reviewer

Stuart Moses

Rating

4/10



People have accused me of listening to music that is depressing, but my usual choice of gothic rock is uplifting compared to these ten slices of moody melancholy. Opening song "Funerals" is built around echo-laden pianos and snatched sounds from a TV playing next door. Keyboards, of the swirling and surly variety, supply the muted climax. Only the observant will have notice when the CD moves into "Across The Divide". There is a piano sample that repeats in such a jarring manner I had to check that my CD player wasn't jumping. After a minute and a half it is almost a relief when the surging synthesisers return. More samples give the track a gloomy atmosphere.

There's a little more movement to "From One Dream Into The Next" but the basis is still a piano played in an empty room, with the TV on. I'm all for a CD having a consistency of sound, but it has to be an interesting sound otherwise boredom comes calling. "The Only Alternative" has ghostly monks blown about the room by Arctic winds. Much happens at the edges of your imagination. It'll give you the willies if you listen to it in the dark, but why would you choose to do so? The sadistic among you would use this as a soundtrack in a flotation tank. What terrors of the deep would this music conjure? As the listener you'd need to make most of the running, as this music offers suggestions of images, rather than painting you a picture. Alternatively you could use this as the last song in a club, it's guaranteed to give your punters nightmares though.

"No Lights In Our Eyes" is nearly nine minutes long. If the intention of the song was to drain the listener of the will to live then it succeeded. More repetitive piano and synths, enlivened by some creaking. This at least allowed me to imagine that I am on an abandoned vessel sailing through the haunted Sargasso Sea. The sounds ebb and flow, but I'm hungering for some different textures. With its emphasis on sonorous synths "Long The Night" has a tincture of Dead Can Dance majesty. I could live without the spoken word samples though. "Standing Still" has more samples and piano-recorded-in-an-underground sewer. I also imagine I'm walking round a country in black and white, witnessing people sick with plague. Once again the monks wail plaintively in the background. Ironically, given the title, this song creates the image of a giant stomping around somewhere echoey.

More ill people in a world of black and white are conjured by "Hearts And Minds" which features some sort of plaintively plucked instrument and the sounds of a woman crying. It's stark and brutal. Things do develop, but never in an interesting enough direction to warrant the near nine-minute running time. Beyond Sensory Experience need to expand the library of sounds from which they borrow. A howling gale provides the basis for the fragmentary "Strange That Our Lives Should End". Things limp to a close with "The End Has No Beginning" which offers more of the same.

If you are the sort of person that likes your music to be a blank canvas, which also fires your imagination then Beyond Sensory Experience might be for you. While listening to this CD for the purpose of review I was writing a short story, based around an abandoned mental asylum. In such a scenario the music made a good foreboding soundtrack. That's quite a specific reason for listening though. This music won't appeal to everyone. There are only a few set of circumstances where it appeals to me. I'm glad that there are people making music according to their muse, with no thought to commerce, but just because I admire the purity of a band's intent doesn't mean I want to listen to the results.