

Confessions in Silence

This album is a collection of entirely improvised tracks recorded on my then-new digital piano in 2014/2015. No MIDI editing or any other type of tampering with the original recordings has been used, apart from a mild final mastering: all the pieces are 100% authentic, complete with mistakes and structural inconsistencies, and employing whatever sound settings I had active on my instrument at the time. They are, therefore, very immediate emotional snapshots, unspoiled by the filters of conscious, purposeful musical arrangement. While *Confessions in Silence* may not be an essential, 'core' release for Sidetrack Walker, it is nevertheless relevant, documenting a time of musical and personal development. In a way, improvisations like these are, in fact, the closest I'll ever get to my artistic ideal of absolute authenticity. Since I enjoy the odd melancholic instrumental piano album by artists such as Fabrizio Paterlini or Nils Frahm myself, I figured that there might be listeners out there who will appreciate this material, too.

All tracks improvised and recorded by Dominik Sonders, 2014/2015. Mastered by Andre Jonas (andrejonasmusic.com), 2017. Artwork and handwriting by A.D. Jansen (endira-art.deviantart.com), visual editing and layout by Andre Jonas and Dominik Sonders. Thanks to Andre and A.D. for the invaluable help, and to Kris Clayton for the technical advice!

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1. A Stealthy Thief Called Hope

06/05/2014

Recorded the day after I first got my new digital piano, this piece sets the mood not only for the improvisations on this album, but also for much of the regular material I wrote in the year that followed. Awe-struck by the quality of my new instrument and the experience of being able to play again after years of abstinence from the piano, I revelled in minimalism, enjoying the resonance of every single note. Despite a few mistakes, I still like the themes and overall structure of this recording.

2. Wenn Blicke töten könnten

11/14/2014

I recorded this late at night after returning from an awkward social gathering where the behaviour of a loose acquaintance kept puzzling me, and I was generally overwhelmed by an unpleasant abundance of sensory input and social ambiguities. On the one hand, improvising on the piano was a good way of coming to my senses afterwards, but on the other hand, it also helped deal with the somewhat frustrating impression of not being able to connect. This emotional state is reflected in the atmosphere of the piece.

3. Auch Befreiungsschläge sind Schläge

11/12/2014

I have no excuse for this frantic, mostly atonal improvisation that is heavily influenced by 20th century classical music and Free Jazz (not that I was listening to any of that at the time, though, so don't ask me where the inspiration came from). Recording it was a strangely liberating, cathartic experience. Perhaps I had to put away the shackles of fixed harmonies and rhythms for once in order to appreciate them again. The piece does become noticeably tamer during the last few minutes, though. Whatever Imp of the Perverse may have informed this abomination, I have to admit it's one of my favourites: it seems strangely inspired and natural, and there isn't really anything I'd want to change about it. You have been warned.

4. Twelve Nights Between the Front Lines

12/24/2014

When I recorded this piece, I was in a state of emotional turmoil, filled with naïve passion and unable to let go of it despite knowing that it would inevitably lead to nothing. You can hear this mirrored in the tender melancholy of the improvisation: it speaks of an affection to be cherished and cultivated, yet at the same time there is little hope shining through. There was never any doubt about the outcome.

5. Zu viel des Guten

03/14/2015

Whenever I need a few moments of reflection to sort out my priorities, deal with emotional stress or simply let an abundance of impressions sink in, playing the piano has proven immensely helpful. At the time of this recording, there was a lot of development going on in my life. For instance, my band *Memoirs* was starting to blossom and we were in the process of recruiting a new member. New possibilities seemed to appear from all directions (as documented, with considerable delay, on my upcoming EP, *The Coming of May*), accompanied by fears. I believe that the floating, contemplative nature of the resulting piano piece captures this nicely. Interestingly, though, it becomes darker and darker towards the end as if suggesting that I was subconsciously expecting the worst. And of course, the worst is what I got (as documented, in turn, on the song "The Closing of May", to be featured on the upcoming full-length album). I am planning to rework some of the ideas from this track into a Funeral Doom song in due course.

6. Wo sich das Vorzeichen ändert (Bonus Track)

07/14/2014

Probably a bit too long-winded for its own good and flawed in other respects, too, this bleak, partly free-form improvisation nevertheless features a number of ideas and moments that I like. Due to its shortcomings, I decided to leave it out of the regular album and only include it as a bonus track.