

Sidetrack Walker

Dark Pop for the faint of heart

Sidetrack Walker focuses on atmosphere and honest, emotional songwriting. Headed by German artist Dominik Sonders, the project crystallises influences from various musical genres into an engaging yet challenging Dark Pop blend. Catchy melodies go hand in hand with emotional gut punches. In the words of Tom Slater (Withered Hands Podcast): “You don’t see it coming.”

From Sidetrack Walker’s inception in 2015, the project has come a long way towards establishing its own signature sound. While quite different in terms of style, the albums are all tied together by a deep-felt sense of melancholy and authenticity. Some albums have strong leanings towards Darkwave and the darker side of neoclassical music, whereas *Come What May* (2019) showed more of an Art Rock direction with full-fledged band arrangements.

The fifth studio album, *The Sickness* (2022), combined elements of earlier releases with a stronger focus on sampling and electronics. Its sound was much warmer, almost ‘retro’, drawing heavily on musical influences from the 70s and 90s alike.



In the wake of Dominik’s growing love for synthesizers, it seems only fitting that his attention has since shifted towards the 80s, the decade in which dark styles of music really came into their own. *Extinction Events*, Sidetrack Walker’s latest exploration of the human condition, is a marriage between classic 80s aesthetics and Dominik’s trademark emotional songwriting. The album evokes a timeless sense of dystopia suitable to the present and the 80s alike, both eras in which the threat of global war and nuclear devastation was all too present.

On his sixth full-length album, Dominik asks questions about the role of art in this dystopia: is artistic integrity even possible when cultural artefacts are measured by their profitability or twisted to fit imperialist propaganda and corporate identities? Worse still, is art merely a lame excuse for those too afraid to actually stand up for their beliefs? And what of our individual lives: can we still find some measure of peace and prosperity in all this madness? In its ambiguity, the album also explores the potential that might arise from tragedy. After all, if it hadn’t been for mass *Extinction Events*, mankind might never have existed.

Website and social links: sidetrackwalker.de
Bandcamp: sidetrackwalker.bandcamp.com
Spotify: sptfy.com/sidetrack