



Martin Rev

The Sum of Our Wounds (Cassette Recordings 1973-85)



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CD / LP / digital

The archetypal Martin Rev sound – a perennial influence on generations of musicians – is most prominently in evidence in the works of Suicide, the duo he played in across the decades with Alan Vega. However, the radical and distinctive nature of his music can be traced further back in time, originating in the base energy of rock'n'roll which the teenage Rev experienced as the ubiquitous soundtrack to his home city of New York.

Rev initially explored free jazz and similarly free forms of musical expression before discovering the magnetic attraction of electronic production and instrumentation, enabling him to create music in a wholly independent and autonomous environment. Using the most rudimentary equipment, he grafted the roots of rock'n'roll into the process of combining effects and devices to generate electrified sounds, the likes of which had never been heard before. This music would map out the way forward not only for Suicide, but also for a fascinating solo career.

Martin Rev's predilection for experimentation knew no bounds. At home, he played around with rough ideas, trying out all manner of variations and colorations. These tape recordings provide a captivating insight into his modus operandi, often representing the early stages of what would later become Suicide tracks or cuts on Rev's solo albums.

Spanning the period 1973 to 1985, the recordings on "The Sum of Our Wounds" are much more than a collection of demos and outtakes. One has the sense of listening to a rounded album of familiar compositions, now portrayed in a completely new light. The brittle fragility of these cassette pieces reveals a deep-lying sensitivity, like a collection of wounds.

Martin Rev himself remains as transfixed as ever by these recordings, as if he could immediately pick up where he left off and continue to expand on the ideas that came to him decades ago: »They often have a certain freshness or unpolished energy here... and (there is) always scope for new ideas, to be derived from them as a whole or even in small areas.«

The cassette medium proves to be more than a means to an end – the tape recorder itself has a role to play as an instrument, the ideal basis for an artist who understands how to condense an idea into its fundamental elements: »The cassette sound, with its individual peculiarities, many even thought of in terms of inferior sound, can have an interesting dynamic. Maybe especially in certain minimal contexts when they are not being overloaded. Although they often seem to take on a lot of texture as well and with a warm response.«

And so these snapshots can be seen as stages of a ceaseless evolution, one we are allowed to witness as we sit alongside Martin Rev at the tape deck, listening as he captures the sounds of the quiet city.

- Daniel Jahn, June 2023

Tracklisting

01. Yearning
02. Dreams
03. Skateboard
04. Laredo
05. Zeitpunkt
06. Rio Grande
07. Baby O Baby (Mix)
08. Abracadabra

09. Lineup
10. El Barrio
11. She's Back
12. Temptation (Mix)
13. Asia (Mix)
14. Around The Corner
15. Mari (Mix)
16. Whisper (Vocal)

Promotion

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