



MOEBIUS & RENZIEHAUSEN

Ersatz II

Reissue (originally released in 1992)
CD, LP (180g vinyl), download

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Tracklisting:

1. Osmosis (6:18)
2. Animotion (5:41)
3. Mallot Man (5:33)
4. Miller Time (4:47)
5. Slam Dunk (2:05)
6. Vox Picker (2:45)
7. Whaming Pad (3:35)
8. Miles Away (8:00)
9. Suspiria (6:05)
10. Notre Dame (6:28)
11. Lost Temple (3:40)

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www.bureau-b.com/releases

Essential facts:

- Dieter Moebius is one of the most important protagonists of avant-garde electronic music in Germany. Alongside his bands **Cluster** and **Harmonia** he participated in numerous collaborations (e.g. with **Brian Eno, Mani Neumeier/Guru Guru** and **Conny Plank**).
- Karl Renziehausen, visual artist and constructor of sound sculptures, was a fringe member of the Forst/Weser Uplands creative community (home to **Moebius, Rother, Roedelius** et al). His profound understanding of computers motivated Moebius to enter into a collaboration with him.
- The music: surrealist, minimal / experimental electronics. "Adventures in sound, a world brought to life by the most remarkable characters and atmospheres." (Asmus Tietchens)
- Initially released 1992 on the spanish Nova Era label
- Liner notes by Asmus Tietchens
- Available on **CD, as a download** or on **180g vinyl**
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Two years after the release of "Ersatz" (1990), Moebius and Renziehausen issued "Ersatz 2" as the culmination of their ongoing studio collaboration. It is as meticulously crafted as "Ersatz", dipped in the same luminance and confounds with a similar wealth of musical ideas. And yet "Ersatz 2" does not simply carry on where "Ersatz" (1) left off.

Moebius and Renziehausen composed and improvised quite intuitively on "Ersatz", emptying their music of messy ballast, yet adding decorous, delicate detail. This is even more true of "Ersatz 2", with the marked difference that the music has become even more transparent and the individual tracks shorter in length. The two sound artists reach an almost ascetic level with their unwavering concentration on musical substance and the deliberateness of their creative approach. Almost is the word, for this is a pop album with all of the vibrancy associated with this world. It is neither minimalist in the academic sense nor suitable for any form of meditative exercise, the brevity of the tracks already enough to preclude this. The album also differs from "Ersatz" rhythmically: it is almost danceable. Again, only almost, as Renziehausen and Moebius defy conventional rules of rhythm to such an extent that one might easily stumble. Harmonies and melodies, on the other hand, appear immediately familiar. Nevertheless, listeners will still have a sense of standing (or listening) on shaky ground. "Ersatz 2" defines pop music in an idiosyncratic, rather odd manner, using the same pieces but coming up with whole new patterns. If there were such a thing as a kaleidoscope with asymmetrical pictures, then this would be something to which one could compare the music of "Ersatz 2". Colourful, shimmering and always a little off kilter.

When "Ersatz 2" appeared almost 20 years ago, this form of electronic music had no place in the hype of the early nineties. Moebius and Renziehausen were not bothered in the slightest, instead working towards the goal of their own musical world, a place as vivid and imaginative as possible. Far removed from turgid abstraction, "Ersatz 2" is particularly enjoyable as the two musicians can really be heard playing with one another, intelligently, spontaneously and more than adeptly.

Asmus Tietchens