

Amongst Myselfs

Ambient, Landscape and Space Music

Artist Name: **Amongst Myselfs**

Origin of Name: **Track title from Future Sound of London's "Lifeforms" CD**

Current CD Title: **Still Life**

Description of Still Life: **A collection of photographs transformed into a collage of sounds and emotion**

Previous Releases: **The Sun in the Bottle - 1999**
Unreleased track "5am Melbourne 1996" appeared on AquaFM's first compilation "ambient01@hyperreal"

Style: **Ambient / Landscape / Space**

Description: **quasi melodic landscapes to convey you from the cold abyss of outer space to the distorted recollections of your inner world.**

Record Label: **RMC**

Country of Origin: **Australia**

Online Stores: **CD Street (www.cdstreet.com) in Nth America**
Chaos Music (www.chaosmusic.com) in the Pacific Region
Wide Area Network Records (www.wnarecords.cnet) in Europe

Poem on Ra's Playground: **"How I Love Your Eyes, My Friend" Written by Russian Poet Fyodor Tyutchev**

Email: **amongst@netspace.net.au**

WWW Site: **www.netspace.net.au/~amongst**

Fact Sheet

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Biography

Amongst Myselfes' inroads into electronic/atmospheric music began when he first heard the works of the early electronic groups like Tangerine Dream eg. "Atem" and "Alpha Centauri". During this period he was also exposed to Schulze, Synergy, Gandalf, Peak and the more commercial groups including Kraftwerk, New Order, Vangelis. Australian radio programs like "Dream Time" and "Scratching the Surface" were two of the few outlets where he could hear such work. This line-up of influences started Amongst Myselfes twiddling knobs on his own synthesisers. So with the help of a couple of old cassette decks and synthesisers and lots of enthusiasm Amongst Myselfes started composing.

Amongst Myselfes starting writing under the guise of Southern Garden not to mention also performing to friends, with his New Years' Shows being a great hit. He also released six cassettes worth of material, his most praised being the post-apocalyptic "The Last Day".

In the late '80 and during the early '90 he diversified into playing keyboards and guitars in many local bands of which the guitar based post-punk "Spaghetti Machete" and "The Lost Tribe of Ubobo" were successful with regular appearances at some of Adelaide's old indie haunts like The Royal Admiral Hotel, Royal Oak, Exeter, Austral and The Tivoli. The styles of music were very eclectic ranging from a late punk sound through to world music. "Spaghetti Machete" released 3 albums "Dimensional Tremors", "High and Dry" and "Spaghetti Machete". "Ubobo" also released an album titled "The Lost Tribe of Ubobo" which is in the process of being digitally remastered for 2002 re-release.

During the '90 he became more aware of Future Sound of London, Steve Roach, Robert Rich and Aphex Twin not to mention a new interest in the Eno brothers music. So with the help of advances in computer based synths he took a great interest in the ambient / space arena.

Amongst Myselfes released "The Sun In The Bottle" in 1999 which was a retrospective of pieces written during the previous four years. The style of this album was definitely new age in its basis with a hint of electro-acoustics as heard on tracks "Before Now" and "The Last Woman on Lysithea". "The Sun in the Bottle" received extensive airplay in Europe and the USA.

During 1999 and 2000 he started work on "Still Life" feeling at ease with the ambient / space / drone direction his work is taking. There are still reflections of new age coming through but as reviewer Hans Stoeve mentions in his review of "Still Life", "....he has resisted the urge to compose dramatic music".

"Still Life" was released on June 1st 2001 and was well accepted by both radio DJs and listeners, the track "Ra's Playground" being very popular. Not to mention the track "Ship of Dreams" which has been recently chosen for Australian ambient radio program "Ultima Thule" as the new theme.

At the end of 2000 AquaFM released the compilation titled "ambient01@hyperreal.com" on which appears a previously unreleased piece by Amongst Myselfes titled "5am Melbourne 1996". This piece is planned to be included on a future album. The track "Ra's Playground" from "Still Life" will appear on AquaFM's second ambient compilation "ambient02@hyperreal" due for release on January 15th 2002.

Amongst Myselfes is currently working on a several projects including his new studio which has been constructed within his new house in the hills of Adelaide. Work in well on the way for his new album "Sacred Black" due sometime in 2002.

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MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE USE
JUNE 1, 2001

STILL LIFE – OUT AMONGST THE COSMOS

Described as a new journey into the world of ambient trance/drone, the second release from Amongst Myselfes, 'Still Life' will take listeners on their own personal journey.

Australian ambient musician, Steve Roberts, says 'Still Life' reflects a more calm part of his life.

This release follows 'Sun in the Bottle', which heralded Roberts' emergence onto the Ambient scene in 1999. An 11-track journey into self-realisation and reflection, 'Sun in the Bottle' was well received by the critics and setting the scene for a successful second release from this solo composer.

"While this album does reflect a calm part of my life, there are certainly some tracks that still send shivers down my spine," said Roberts.

Once again, Roberts has drawn on very personal experiences in his composition. 'Encounter at the Bay', reflects experiences from his own childhood spent on the south coast of South Australia.

The release has already been met with critical acclaim by critics from both Australia and the USA.

Jon Ray, from Lastsigh says Still Life is "a recommended headphone experience. There is a fine balance between sadness and hope here...overall it reminds me of slow motion montages," he said.

Powerspot FM host, Hans Stoeve, says that Still Life "aims at a sense of serenity, a quiet space one can retreat to and float away with."

From "one long sheet of sound" to "the sound of afterburners almost vibrating my Epos speakers off their stands", Stoeve's review highlights the various elements of the release, that he believes could be interpreted as "new age" or "space music" by listeners.

Highlights from the album include 'Ra's Playground' and 'Safe in Narwang Baru'.

Excerpts from the new CD are available through the Amongst Myselfes website at <http://www.netSPACE.net.au/~amongst>.

Copies of "Still Life" can be purchased online from CD Street, ChaosMusic, Wide Area Network Records and Amongst Myselfes WWW site.

Steve Roberts can be contacted at amongst@netSPACE.net.au or c/o 12 Margaret Street, Henley Beach SA 5022 AUSTRALIA.

Media Release

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Still Life - Amongst Myselfs (RMC SG 12)

A Review by Hans Stoeve

This is the second release I have heard from Amongst Myselfs (aka Steve Roberts), the first one being *The Sun In The Bottle*, reviewed last year. This is also a more consistent recording and one which further finds him exploring ambient terrains, predominantly in the area of atmospheric and space music. *Still Life* comes across as polished and smooth, an album which has had much thought go into it, certain musical passages heading off into beautiful silences. The ghosts of his musical influences are still there as on the previous release. I am reminded of the likes of Kitaro, Tangerine Dream, even Vangelis. I also appreciate the fact that he has resisted the urge to compose dramatic music. In fact, this album is completely the opposite. It aims at a sense of serenity, a quiet space one can retreat to and float away with, if need be. Some may see this release as heading towards a more classic ambient direction, coupled with environmental sounds, predominantly water and birdlife. After all, those afore mentioned were all early 70's and 80's pioneers of the synthesizers who went on to inspire others to explore the ambient genre further. Some will hear this as new age, others will hear space music. It will sit comfortably on both sides of the fence.

Ra's Playground opens the album, clocking in at over 11 minutes, allowing the artist to explore themes and moods which will be further explored throughout the album. The piece itself is one long sheet of sound, with occasional narrative being read (possibly in Russian). Over this continuous sonic sheet are layers, or waves of sound, as well as environmental sounds, sometimes it sounds as if it is birds, sometimes it doesn't. Other pieces are almost cloudlike in their structure, the music drifting along, gently bobbing to and fro in some sort of delicate vaporous existence. Occasionally Amongst Myselfs allows himself to get a bit cosmic, incorporating rocket lift offs and the like to his music. *Ship Of Dreams* is about as dramatic as you'll get on this recording. Having lifted off, (the sound of afterburners almost vibrating my Epos speakers off their stands), we drift along in outer space, content no doubt to look down on the blue green planet beneath us. Pure Vangelis in its construction and theme. The space theme continues for some time, with what sounds like bullroarers and whirlwinds coming in at some point, to eventually ground the piece. It's the sort of thing Steve Roach might do. Enter the sound of waves crashing, bringing us all back down to earth. Relics of an Early Universe introduces the sound of (what sounds like) an old piano, reminiscent of some of the ghost town piano music Harold Budd has engaged in. It's a nice way to end the album.

Steve Roberts has certainly evolved his sound with *Still Life*. For anyone who is interested in electronic music, it's worth the effort to seek out a copy. I believe he also has a track on the compilation CD entitled *ambient@hyperreal.com*, brought out by some of the participants on the same discussion list. As far as electronic ambient music goes, this is quite a satisfying release. One wishes him luck with *Still Life*, as well as future projects. For further info contact him direct at amongst@netspace.net.au or check his web site at <http://www.netspace.net.au/~amongst>

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Reviews 1

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Artist: Amongst Myselfs Album: *Still Life* Label: *RMC*

If you're not half asleep when you begin listening to *Still Life*, you will be by disc's end. Recording as Amongst Myselfs, Steve Roberts demonstrates his natural ability in spacemusic. Rather than coerce his synths, Roberts communes with them and composes soft labyrinthine soundscapes of well designed detail. The arrangement of *Still Life* obviously began somewhere outside of the music studio where Roberts carefully plotted the placement and delivery of each sound. Once inside, he used the studio as a compositional tool, realizing nine ambient tracks which resonate in each of us differently. This is not an album that acts through repetition, not the edited highlights of an extended process. *Still Life* is a very personal conception, dutifully crafted and produced. The intricate windings are contoured with the unpredictability of a dream, making the album contemplative, yet bewildering. This music is an immersive experience and locates the listener in a different space from where they began.

An album in the truest sense of the word, *Still Life* is a scrapbook of sounds containing a range of shapes and moods. A perfumed nightmare, an uninhabited theme, the cool of blue - with each listen this album adds another shade to the emotional palette. Due to its indistinction of form, the album must be described in relation to its tension and release - compression and expansion. When compared to a gallery walk, this album becomes a collection of sonic vignettes ranging from the serene to the brash, the muddled to the crystalline, from calm to stormy and ultimately more interesting with each visit. This *Still Life* is one created in impressionistic style, the true sonic representation of something remembered.

- Chuck van Zyl/STAR'S END 16 August 2001

amongst myselfs: still life (RMC Records - 2000)

Australian ambience from amongst myselfs (gotta love the subtle schizophrenia in that one!)...

This still life is not the kind with fruits on a table...this is the kind with immersive ever-changing alien atmospheres strewn with traces of more-Earthly musical essences.

The boiling substrata of Ra's Playground (11:24) twists beneath glimmering shreds of tonal ribbons and sharper crystalline chirps; from within this wormhole dimension comes softly spoken words of unknown meaning, but only for a few moments, after which this atmosphere fades to nothingness. Lower (and sparser) tones travel on various planes through the phantasmal zones of Shepherd of the Rings, an intriguing place indeed. Whispery electronics are engulfed in a violent explosion of sound and its resulting vacuum rush as *The Ground Melts* (1:46).

Cyclical space-notes rotate over vast organ drones in *Ship of Dreams*, conjuring interstellar visions before the piece evolves into an epic bit of snare-drum and synthorchestra majesty. Safe in Narwang Baru's vaporous streams eventually are permeated by percussive pulsations. Entrancingly murky *Encounter at the Bay* occurs within a deep, fluttering stew; light symphonic shimmers float above, while more-powerful drones plow straight through, until ocean waves come crashing.

The otherwise-smoothly-soaring breezes of Lowell's Legacy are cried into by several echoey, pitch-shifted bellowings and yells. Spiraling ephemera soaks in *Darkness*, periodically blasted by strong guitar blurts, then spaced-out electronics and voices. The adventure continues until, following a bassy haze, the off-kilter plinks of *Relics of an Early Universe* enigmatically waft in stasis.

steve roberts is amongst myselfs; he paints still life's offworld audioimagery with bold strokes from his wide studio palette, decorating here and there with subtler sweeps. An evolving panorama of 8.3 soundscenes which are anything but still.

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Reviews 2