

Black Faction Reworked Review

Album. Released 2002.



Tracks

- 1 Grains
- 2 Cartesian
- 3 Afghan Front Mix 3
- 4 Kaftanistanabul 1 (Universal Deluxe remix)
- 5 Odessian (Rapoon remix)
- 6 Caligulan (Rapoon remix)
- 7 Sepia Indate (Keith Fullerton Whitman remix)
- 8 Oakland Concrete (Sutekh remix)
- 9 Modanesa (Arlesian Girl remix by Valea Djinn)
- 10 Dante Is Afraid of Virgil's Vision
- 11 Window Maker (Nemesis remix)
- 12 Alska Dig Min Karlek (John Hudak remix)
- 13 Into the Aether
- 14 Anti-Freeze (Props mix by Black Moses)
- 15 Cactus Burial Final (Black Arc / Cclay remix)
- 16 Dissidents in Exile (Foreign Terrain / Cclay remix)
- 17 Mina Schoen Unreleased (Seven Sages version by Black Arc)

Clips taken from original discs may contain strong language.

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BBC Review

Industrial ambient ethno dub forgery...

Peter Marsh 2002

Black Faction are a breed apart from the average electronica outfit. Their dark, expansive soundscapes have an edge and drive that puts them firmly in the kind of lineage that stretches from the 'industrial' experiments of Zoviet France to the brutal electrofunk of Cabaret Voltaire through to the ethnodub of Muslimgauze.

Despite the music's digital origins, Black Faction's Andrew Diey infuses his material with the organic qualities of tape composition (he studied musique concrete technique) and approaches his material with a surgeon's deliberation.

Last years Internal Dissident (released on the highly individual Soleilmoon imprint) showcased Diey's skill as an engineer of atmospheres. Based loosely on Dante's Divine Comedy, much of the album's hallucinatory power derived from Diey's use of speech and 'natural' ambience (his day job is as a sound designer for radio and TV); the phrase 'invisible soundtrack' has become a bit of a cliché these days, but at its best and most abstract, Dissident was a strikingly visual, stygian work, best listened to with lights off.

Remix projects are two a penny these days. Often the remix bears little or no relationship to the original (Richard D James is rumoured to have duped curators of such projects by simply giving them some of his unused material and passing it off as a remix) and the results are patchy and incoherent. Diey has chosen his remixers for Reworked with care, adding sound design touches to many of the mixes, and has sequenced the results with his trademark narrative approach.

The outcome is an album that feels like an album rather than a compilation. The remixes (including Diey's own) reign in the occasional excesses of the originals. Universal Delux offers superbly beefy Laswellian dubhop without the flab; Rapoon (Zoviet France's Robin Storey) and Keith Fullerton Whitman (aka Hrvatski) slowburn their raw material into threateningsulphurous heat haze; Sutekh's "Oakland Concrete" is scratchy basstronics, full of earcatching abstractions. John Hudak's short granular reworks eddy the originals into beautiful powdery swirls; throughout Diey's atmospherics add rich, deep space backgrounds.

Polish duo Nemesis warp "Window Maker" into deeply opiate ambient dub, with halfspeed drums chugging under distant strings, hovering chords and keening voice samples. The Black Faction remixes add more grit and texture, with "Cartesian" particularly effective in its combination of portentous atmospherics and minimal techno matrix (imagine if Dead can Dance signed to Mille Plateaux).

If shivers down your spine are what you're after, this is prog gothic ethnoforgery electronica at its finest. Recommended.

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