

Mouse on Mars

Dimensional People

Thrill Jockey Records - April 13, 2018

Mouse on Mars' **Andi Toma** and **Jan St. Werner** return with their most inventive album to date, *Dimensional People*. The new album finds the Berlin-based duo reunited with Thrill Jockey, a powerful aesthetic partnership marked by such seminal albums as *Radical Connector* (2004), *Idiology* (2001), and *Niun Niggung* (2000). After a series of notorious dance floor releases, *Dimensional People* reveals them working deep within their own vernacular, digging into fertile terrain of their inexhaustible vault of digital and acoustic experimentation, and charismatically making elemental components new again.

This album makes clear how their craft is of discovery, of finding new contexts for places, sounds, memories, sensations, ambiences, technologies, relationships, and of course, people.

A number of prolific guests joined the production: **Justin Vernon (Bon Iver)**, **Zach Condon (Beirut)**, **Spank Rock**, **Aaron** and **Bryce Dessner (The National)**, **Swamp Dogg**, **Eric D. Clark**, **Lisa Hannigan**, **Amanda Blank**, **Sam Amidon**, **Ensemble Musikfabrik**, and about 20 more musical collaborators. The cast of characters are as unique as they are vast, clearly a rich quarry for the prodigious duo.

Dimensional People, initially titled *new konstruktivist socialism*, gives each participating guest a platform to imprint the album as whoever or whatever they want to be: a narrator, a perfect moment, a jam, an ensemble member, an abstract sound, a multiple persona, a mood, a soloist. Originally premiering as a spatial composition using object-based mixing technology playing with the possibilities of sonic design and collective musicianship, the recording expands upon these ideas. *Dimensional People* expresses itself as a dynamic 50-piece orchestra, telling a story in sound. Each player is a multifaceted character, the recording an imagined stage, and the production is direction, lighting, and setting changes. Mouse on Mars offer sound as a means to encourage open-minded societies, aided by cutting-edge technology including their own **MoMinstruments** music software or a spatial mixing technique called object based mixing, with which a spatial version of the work was created. It is a conceptual puzzle composed around one harmonic spectrum within one rhythmic scheme, mostly in the tempo of 145bpm (inspired by Chicago footwork, so the dance floor is not entirely absent). Looking ahead, *Dimensional People* will also be realized through installation, presenting the work as an immersive listening experience, as well as performance.



Additional Notes

Recording *Dimensional People*:

Recordings began in Mouse on Mars' **Paraverse 4** studio at the Funkhaus in Berlin through experiments with sonic robots, percussion, and ensemble musicians. MoMinstruments' mobile music apps **Elastic Drums** and **fluXpad** provided basic electronic layouts. Building on this were sessions from Michelberger's September 2016 Music Festival at the Funkhaus with Bon Iver, Aaron and Bryce Dessner, Senyawa, Sam Amidon, and Ben Lanz. By winter of that year, Mouse on Mars had decamped to Berlin's Michelberger Hotel, setting up their studio with a view over Warschauer Bahnhof. Sessions ensued with vocalist Zach Condon and trumpet player C.J. Camerieri of yMusic. In summer 2017, additional sessions took place at Bon Iver's **April Base Studios** in Wisconsin: some drums, pedal steel, banjo, and strings. Spank Rock, Amanda Blank, and Justin Vernon performed on Mouse on Mars' sketches. Around this time, Aaron Dessner was recruited for some guitar sessions and soul legend Swamp Dogg sat down and told stories about his life. Frogs from the nearby pond added a profound dimension of reality. Back in Germany, Jan and Andi made a spatial mix of the album at d&b's new soundscape studio in Backnang. They continued their work with Ensemble Musikfabrik from Cologne, Zach Condon returned to their Michelberger spacestation, DJ and singer Eric D. Clark was thrown into the mix, and Bryce Dessner played guitar and provided string arrangements. By fall 2017 things were coming to a close. Members of Australian group **Parcels** came in for choir sessions, Ben Lanz provided trombone dubs, and **Lisa Hannigan** recorded over previous sessions with singer and violinist Sam Amidon. In November 2017 the duo holed up and the final stereo version of the album was mixed.



Full Personnel List:

Swamp Dogg - Vocals, Lyrics
JT Bates - Drums
Zach Condon - Voice, Lyrics
Spank Rock- Vocals, Lyrics

Amanda Blank - Vocals, Lyrics
DJ Delish - Moves
Zach Morgan - Engineering
Sam Greens - Engineering
Eric D. Clark - Voice, Piano, Lyrics
Aaron Dessner - Guitar
Bryce Dessner - String Arrangements, Guitar
Rob Moose - Violins
Justin Vernon - Guitar, Voice, Lyrics
Barbara Jean Meyers - Voice, Violin, Lyrics
Phil Cooks - Banjo
Ben Lester - Pedal Steel
Matthew McCaughan - Shaker & Percussion
Mike Lewis - Saxophone
Trevor Hagen - Trumpet
Sam Amidon - Violin, Voice, Lyrics
C.J. Camerieri - Trumpet
Lisa Hannigan - Voice
Ben Lanz - Trombone
Simon Moritz Geist - Sonic Robots
Michael Rauter - Cello
Matti Gajek - Electronics
April Base Frogs - Ambience
Warschauer Strasse - Noise
Michelberger Hotel - Ambience
Jonathan Low - Engineering
Dirk Leyers - Engineering
Helen Bledsoe - Flute
Christine Chapman - French Horn
Nathan Plante - Trumpet
Bruce Collings - Trombone
Melvyn Poore - Tuba
Benjamin Kobler - Piano
Dirk Rothbrust - Percussion
Hannah Weirich - Violin
Axel Porath - Viola
Dirk Wietheger - Violoncello
Michinori Bunya - Double Bass
Lola Ridge - Lyrics
Noah Hill - Voice
Patrick Hetherington - Voice, Guitar
Louie Swain - Voice, Piano
Anatole Serret- Voice
Andi Toma - Electronics, Guitar, Bass
Jan St. Werner - Electronics, Harmonica, Piano