



Artist: SANKT OTTEN
Album: TOTE WINKEL
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Tracklist:

01. Geweint Wird Nur Zum Schluss 9:23
02. Toter Winkel (Klick, Klick, Klick) 4:43
03. Es Wird Wieder Schlechtere Tage Geben 5:07
04. Die Gute Fee War Schon Da 3:13
05. Filterkaffee und Finsternis 7:05
06. Goodbye, Düsseldorf 3:41
07. Schon Wieder Apokalypse 10:21

In spring 2022, Sankt Otten released their album “Symmetrie und Wahnsinn”, and now the next record is ready to enlighten our maltreated minds. “Tote Winkel” (Blind spots) is once again part of an album series with a geometric context, both creatively and musically.

Stephan Otten and Oliver Klemm made productive use of 2021, which has been decelerated to the maximum by Corona. For the first time, an external studio was booked (Mühle der Freundschaft, Bad Iburg) and the pool of analog synthesizers and other sound generators there was dusted off. Sankt Otten came up with the master plan to first free the spirit of 50 years of German electronic music trapped in the antiquated keyboards and oscillator housings, then to dismantle it, turn it inside out and reinterpret it. Echoes of music from Düsseldorf are joined by sounds familiar from the Weserbergland, or mystical, sublime arcs of sound and, of course, the sequences typical of the Berlin School - whether side by side or interwoven. In a departure from the usual way of working, the majority of the tracks were created in the studio and in part from improvisations, which makes “Tote Winkel” the most organic material we have heard from Sankt Otten to date.

TOTE WINKEL – track by track

Meditative sequences introduce us to the new album in „Geweint wird nur zum Schluss“, analog string pads hang in the sky, while the synthesizers chirp and rustle as much as the devices will allow. In the midst of layers and shapes, the interplay of guitar and oscillator merges into perfect harmony.

If there's already a vocoder on the studio's shelf, then it has to be used. For the first time in twenty years, a voice can be heard on Sankt Otten: „Toter Winkel (Click, Click, Click)“ provides answers to two questions at once: „What would Sankt Otten have sounded like in 1980?“ and „What is this synth-pop that everyone is talking about?“ We also ask: Is this the secret hit of the album?

A little trivia for the nerds: the starting point for „Es wird wieder schlechtere Tage geben“ was the random playback of a defective Roland SH-1000 synthesizer. Stephan Otten drummed live to it, while Oliver Klemm recorded a Juno 106 surface. Guitars and synth melodies were then overdubbed and the contribution to the Doomkrautambient subgenre was ready - released into the world by Sankt's grace.

„Die gute Fee war schon da“ is like the deep inhalation and exhalation of the machine, which does not bode well. Nevertheless, it casts a spell over us like the approaching headlights of a car on a deer. The piece was recorded live, except for the guitar. Martin Schmeing, who sat at the console in the studio for the recording, spontaneously sat down at the DX7.

„Filterkaffee und Finsternis“ begins gently with a soft sequence, very much in the style of a classically contemplative Sankt Otten track. The piece wanders through a subtle Rhodes melody and the constant opening of the oscillator timbre. Oliver Klemm's guitar sings in the background and sweetens this soundtrack to coffee and cake in the middle of the end of the world.

The Motorik-beat, refined with warm, analog 80s electronic sounds and a loose echo guitar, makes „Goodbye, Düsseldorf“ almost danceable, but definitely a head-nodder. You desperately struggle to find the reference in sound and melody, but in the end you capitulate to the realization that Sankt Otten is both past and future at the same time.

With the laconic remark „Schon wieder Apokalypse“, Sankt Otten finally release us into the night. Once again, it is iconic sequencer sounds and a soundscape of Mellotron sounds that unite Past & Future Tense and create a bracket around “Tote Winkel” that sets it apart from other Sankt Otten albums and transports it into its very own sound worlds. The contrast between mere repetition and clever changes within the composition develops its own pull over the 10 minutes of the piece. Klaus Schulze would probably have given his OK.

New York-based Rafael Anton Irisarri mastered “Tote Winkel”, as he has done on productions by Biosphere, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Tycho, Terry Riley, Fennesz and many more. As part of the series of graphic covers, this extraordinary die-cut artwork was also designed by Daniel Castrejon. The vinyl version comes in a die-cut cover and colored vinyl, the CD in an elegant cardboard slipcase.

The Osnabrück duo Sankt Otten, founded in 1999, have been releasing on DENOVALI since 2009. “Tote Winkel” is their 14th album of timeless (instrumental) music. The band has dedicated itself to the holy trinity of Krautrock, Ambient and contemporary Electronics.

STEPHAN OTTEN: Drums, Programming, Synthesizers, Voice

OLIVER KLEMM: Guitars, Synthesizers, Rhodes