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Q & A with MCMGM

Who are the band members and what do they play?

Gunnar Madsen, as MCMGM, plays the computer - Plugins, keyboards, sound generators, sound modifiers

How and where did you get together?

Gunnar Madsen met the electronic side of himself in the years leading up to the pandemic; prior to that he'd made his mark exploring acapella with The Bobs and writing rock to classical music for stage (Off-Broadway), video games (Atari), television (Sex and the City) and films (The Break-up). During the pandemic he embraced the computer as an instrument fully of itself, and churned out 2 full albums of electronic work

What are your main influences?

I'd like to think I made this music in a vacuum, but, really... I've recognized some resemblances to the musics of Nerve Net; Clap! Clap!; Plaid; rAHHH; Teeth Agency; Vegyn; Rian Treanor; Four Tet; Herbie Hancock; Photay; and Sophie

Have you played any notable gigs, festivals or other events? Likewise radio or TV appearances?

As MCMGM? No. As Gunnar Madsen I've appeared all over - The Tonight Show, BBC, RAI, major stages and festivals across North America and Europe.

Are there any other interesting or amusing happenings – no matter how small – that you have been involved with that would be of interest to those who like your music?

My young teenage son taught himself Logic Pro and was cranking out heavy Dubstep grooves, and he showed me how he did it. He would twist knobs, modify sounds with chains of plugins (4 compressors in a row, anyone?), and make music without caring what the 'notes' were, in the process creating amazing new sounds. My first attempts at creating like this were stumbling, but eventually I grew to love this new way of composing and listening for new sounds.

Do you have any favourable quotes from previous reviews that you'd be happy to share?

Reviews of Gunnar Madsen's music:

"Unsettling, disturbing, challenging, even a little awe-inspiring." New York Times
"For anybody serious about experimental music" AMZ Musiczine
"As witty as all get-out and often unexpectedly touching" Los Angeles Times
"Spinning World is, in a word, magnificent" BabySue/LMNOP
"By far the best instrumental piano album to cross this desk this year" Wildy's World
"Breathtaking in its delicate musicality" Parents' Choice

Where was the album recorded and who was involved in its production?

It was recorded in MCMGM's backyard studio. He enlisted the help of various composer friends for help with the mixes, and relied on Myles Boisen for Mastering.

Is there a particular ethos behind the album or any particular music styles or events that inspired it?

It was freeing to leave behind lyric content and focus only on the sound, and generate music that would inspire dance and motion yet avoid being overly simplistic. Rave with brains, maybe?

Can you tell us a bit about some of the music?

"Straight Six" is like a samba that's been stripped down to the most basic beat - it still has a bubbling energy quality, but it's grounded and heavy, so it can shake things up on the dance floor. "Kidday" is jazzy and swinging, a throwback to Weather Report or Herbie Hancock, but again, heavier and aimed at current dance music audiences.

Were there any notable or amusing happenings surrounding the recording/production of On The Floor?

While many musicians I know hunkered down and made pandemic albums that embodied the mood of the pandemic, I found myself wanted to write something more uplifting for these times of trouble. This pandemic has been super hard for my family and my home - I suppose writing music of a lighter character was a way to not sink deeper into gloom.

Can you give a one-line quote to encapsulate?

"Lockdown has been a new experience for most of us - I needed to dance, to move, to get outside myself and the confines of the lockdown".