



CLUSTER

O N E H O U R

Reissue (originally released 1994)
CD / vinyl (180g) / download

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no tracks; 60 minutes of music

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Key info:

- In 1994 the seminal electronic duo Cluster (Dieter Moebius & Hans-Joachim Roedelius) continued what they had begun in 1990 with “Apropos Cluster”, their comeback album. The more mature “One Hour” condenses essential passages from two lengthy sessions into 60 minutes. We hear sprawling soundscapes, clear acoustic sketches, musical extravaganzas, in short: highly impressionistic electronica.
- Liner notes by Asmus Tietchens
- Originally released 1994 on Prudence Records
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Cluster’s hiatus between “Curiosum” and “Apropos Cluster” in 1990 lasted for almost ten years. Roedelius and Moebius spent this time developing their individual musical characteristics in a series of solo albums and collaborations which they released with other musicians. Naturally, they also thoroughly explored newly emerging digital technology. Cluster’s music evolved substantially through this decade, less so in basic style (colour had simply been added to Cluster’s world), but more in a more mature handling of rhythm, harmony and melody. If “Apropos Cluster” had been the fulminant reboot, then “One Hour” four years later was already represented a fully formed progression of the new concept.

Roedelius and Moebius stayed true to their spirit of improvisation, playing together with a minimum of prior arrangements. So, in the duo’s finest tradition, “One Hour” is the product of two sessions recorded in the studio of musician and sound engineer Eric Spitzer-Marlyn in Austria. 60 minutes were selected from the most interesting passages and assembled into a coherent, cohesive musical sequence.

The askesis in the apparent matter-of-factness and lightness of “One Hour” is an expression of strict artistic conception. Nothing veers off course, not a single flash of genius is overplayed. Moebius and Roedelius guide their listeners deeper and deeper into the fantastical realm of musical extravaganzas. One image follows the next, disappearing in similarly unhurried fashion to be replaced by another. As placid as “One Hour” may seem, the album is nothing less than meditative. This is not ambient music. High impressionism would be a more apposite description. Appreciating the fleeting imagery and flow of ideas requires the listener’s undivided attention. Using Cluster as acoustic room scent would be a hopeless undertaking. The exquisite particles of sound would dissipate far too quickly and ineffectively.

Asmus Tietchens