



PETER BAUMANN

ROMANCE 76

Reissue. Originally released 1976

CD / vinyl

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Tracklisting:

- 1 Bicentennial Presentation (4:52)
- 2 Romance (6:08)
- 3 Phase by Phase (7:41)
- 4 Meadow of Infinity Part I (3:48)
- 5 The Glass Bridge (3:45)
- 6 Meadow of Infinity Part II (6:45)

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From 1971 to 1977, Peter Baumann was a member of the legendary Berlin band **TANGERINE DREAM**. The group were pioneers of the so called Berliner Schule (Berlin School) which had such a profound impact on electronic music. He produced a number of momentous albums at his Paragon Studio (by the likes of Conrad Schnitzler, Cluster, Hans-Joachim Roedelius) and also enjoyed success as a solo artist. His first two solo works are now being reissued with extensive liner notes and rare photographs. The influence of Tangerine Dream can clearly be heard on “Romance 76”, although the arrangements are comparatively minimalist—a state of affairs for which David Bowie can be held partially responsible (see below).

With Peter Baumann on board, Tangerine Dream grew into one of the most influential bands in electronic Krautrock, sited somewhere between experimental electronica and progressive rock. Open to new ideas, Baumann’s positive aura and eagerness to experiment galvanized the band’s music almost instantaneously. His catchy melodies, rich in positivity, propelled Tangerine Dream into the charts.

After five years of chart appearances and extensive touring through Europe and North America, punctuated by several albums—including “Atem”, John Peel’s nominated import album of 1973—Baumann called time on his solo career with “Romance 76”. “We found some time between tours and record productions, so Edgar recorded a solo disc and helped Christoph and me to develop our own music too. ‘Romance 76’ resulted from the urge to create new music. I felt we had begun repeating ourselves in Tangerine Dream and I was keen to discover new things, to carry on experimenting. Improvisation had been common to us all, but on your own it isn’t quite so simple. I started to work on my own pieces.” This shift in focus led him to leave Tangerine Dream towards the end of 1977. He and a friend set up the Paragon Studio in Berlin, which would earn a prominent place in music production history, but that’s another story.

Still a member of the band in 1976, Baumann rented a hall in the ufaFabrik, Berlin to record “Romance 76”. Sonic similarities to Tangerine Dream can be explained by the fact that the group used the same space for gig rehearsals, giving Baumann access to their instruments. The distinctive sound of a modular synthesizer system christened “The Big One” can be detected on “Romance 76”, for example, along with a Mellotron.

Some tracks on the album, such as “Romance” and “Phase By Phase”, are relatively minimalist in character. This airiness lends the unusual synth sounds space to unfold in all their glory. A state of affairs for which David Bowie is partially responsible, as Baumann recalls: “We were in Berlin and met him for dinner, then he would call in while I was recording the album, listening carefully to what I was working on. I explained to him what still needed to be done, but Bowie suggested: ‘Leave it as it is, there’s enough there already.’” At which point Baumann decided to look at the tracks in question as finished.