



# Elephant Chateau

DREAMINGS & OFFSHORE DRILLING – PEARLS AND TURTLES

CD / LP / Digital

Release: April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020

*«It's like an illegal anti-freudian love affair, or am I too romantic?»*

Marlene McCarthy in "Wir fangen mit Arbeit an"

Songs leave us cold or we fall in love with them instantly. That's probably what happened to Okonkole y Trompa 2017 when he wrote a euphoric review of Dreamings by Elephant Château on his weblog and infected quite a few music diggers. Up to Olivier Lamm, who commented euphorically on Dreamings in the Libération on 3 February 2020 *«C'est de la dynamite, Le son du jour #423: élevé comme elephant château ... cette odyssée alanguie d'un collectif bâlois inconnu dans nos contrées va vous trotter dans la tête toute la journée.»* And dreamings was not the only song that found its way to listeners and into their legs, as songs or as remix material. The 30-year delay between creation and discovery is astonishing. But as Veith Stauffer already wrote in 1998 on "Offshore Drilling" *"One of the most underrated albums in the history of experimental rock music in Switzerland"*.

From 17 April 2020, the productions of Elephant château are now available again. With the title "Dreamings & Offshore Drilling - Pearls and Turtles" the Hamburg label Bureau B combines the 12" Maxi released in 1985 and the CD/LP "Offshore Drilling" released in 1990.

*"Offshore Drilling" is a work full of emotion, melancholy and unacademic joy of experimentation.* (Veit Stauffer, April 1991)

The recordings show the work of "Elephant Château" in a variety of different formations with various guest musicians, recorded between 1982 and 1989. Well-sounding film music ("Le Fin"), free jazz experiments ("J'aime rien") and ambient electronics ("Nebellied") up to the showpiece "Wir fangen mit der Arbeit anfangen", a German monologue spoken by the American artist Marlene McCarthy, accompanied by a sensual crackling sound backdrop.

*The songs are of a kind that could not be done today.*

Elephant Château emerged from this collaboration with Marlene McCarthy, as a loose formation for a performative publication of texts. The core consisting of Max Spielmann (git, keyb), Johannes Vetsch (bs, voc, keyb) and until 1986 Christian Schaffner (git, voc, perc) continued working afterwards. With Franziska Strebel (dr, perc) it became something like a band, with the claim to record credible intellectual rock music. They exploited the sound spectrum of the 80s, from analog synthesizers and rhythm machines to samplers and digital effects units without technoid coldness, but full of emotion, melancholy and unacademic joy of experimentation. Analogue songs like "We start with work" and "j'aime rien" stand besides rhythm and sequencer tracks like "Dreamings" or "Fog Song", which often brought the available technology to its knees, at least live.

Veit Stauffer's description of Offshore Drilling's songs probably remains unsurpassed even today: "Although the album was put together over several years, it seems determined, as if all of a piece. "She Had Hair" was immediately covered by SKY BIRD, "Sammelweiss" tells the tragic story of the discoverer of childbed fever 100 years ago and sounds like a THIS HEAT outtake, "Strange Days" turns the DOORS title into a charmingly underexposed hymn, "J'Aime Rien" sounds like the meeting of the ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO with CATALOGUE and THE GOVERNMENT. "La Fin" on the other hand reminds us of the credits of a German TV crime thriller. Page 2 starts like WIRE with "1.03 CM Above Their Heads", "Not All The Day" celebrates pure CAN magic, the climax of the record with real DAMO SUZUKI groove and strong lyrics, "Wir fangen mit Arbeit an" sets the crazy everyday lyrics of a German-speaking American to music. Feat. MARLENE McCARTHY, FRANZISKA STREBEL, CHRISTIAN SCHAFFNER, BASCHI BAUMGARTNER, CHRISTOPH GALLIO, CORNELIA MELIAN and others". (Veit Stauffer, October 1998)

### Tracklisting

1. Dreamings
2. Not All The Day
3. Wir fangen mit der Arbeit an
4. 1.03 cm Abover Their Heads
5. She Had Hair
6. La Fin
7. Semmelweiss
8. Strange Days
9. How To Fal In Big City
10. Nebellied
11. Rendez-Vous In The Sky
12. J'aime rien
13. Cathedral 1



### Promotion

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