

Miki Yui - Reviews

„Starting from a perception of the faintest sounds and noises, Miki Yui develops pieces of music, drawings and sound installations that are subtle references to existents.“

— Erich Franz (art curator)

"Miki Yui's creations emulate nature's own structures, and they go well beyond trying, they succeed where others fail.

Her music is not a river, in fact it overflows in all directions imaginable, and it seems like the sounds and their interaction describe a kind of natural evolution. It's like watching a web woven in time-lapse, or mushroom or butterfly. Instead of the camera or the microscope it's the microphone capturing the proceedings from close-up. Thus we experience the energy and life itself, unbridled and unrelenting." - Toulouse Lowtrax (musician)

Strömen - Review Boomkat July 2023

Miki Yui's latest minimalist epic comes a full two decades after her last album for Line, 2003's legendary 'Silence Resounding'. 'Strömen' is similarly absorbing, a surreal throb of sub bass and advanced modular synthesis that's inspired by her experience in the Amazon rainforest.

When Yui went to Manaus in Brazil to see the Amazon rainforest, she was immediately struck by the sounds she heard. They reminded her of the microscopic sounds she's been creating since 1999, and she was prompted to create another environment from her observations in an attempt to merge the natural and the artificial. The easiest way to approach this would have probably been to use processed field recordings, but that was a technique Yui had exhausted on her previous Line releases. Here, she uses a modular synthesizer, an instrument she admits she has little idea of how to use. So, creating her sounds intuitively, she set about developing a workflow that would feel organic, even if it was flowing from machines.

The music is surprisingly animated, and although Yui claims to be no expert with her instrument, 'Strömen' is far more interesting than the average modular braindump. She creates watery tones that appear to wind, grow and blossom like plants, chirp like birds or whine like insects. Every sound melts into the next, and while her palette varies subtly, the tracks melt into each other fluidly. As the album develops, the low-focus drones and tones are given more animation and brought to life with pitchy wails and brittle, gusty whines. By the time we reach the long finale, the sound is all upper-register cricked chirps and elongated metallic resonance. It's a trip through a distant, alien landscape that's far more inviting than you might expect.

Mills - Review Boomkat June 2018

*Quietly revered Japanese artist Miki Yui makes a shimmering lower case outing with 'Mills' for Sam Weaver's excellent, roving Cusp Editions. Verging on the sound sensitivities familiar to David Toop's music, and blessed with the kind of filigree attention to detail which haunts Bellows or Elodie's miasmic small sounds, Mills is a totally absorbing and ultimately psychedelic experience - but read that as slow, waking dream psychedelia, rather than mind-melt headf*ck. Listen with your windows open for lushest effect!*
"Boundless solar oscillations in exquisite cycle; this new record from Miki Yui is as playful as it is mesmerizing.

Cuspeditions warmly welcomes Japanese artist Miki Yui to the label, with a work delicately crafted from field recordings, synthesizer, solar oscillator and sampler. Yui is known for the unique nature of her music (apparent also in past collaborations with Rolf Julius, Rie Nakajima and Klaus Dinger), and whilst Mills retains the subtlety and sensuousness of her earlier works, these new coherent and lucid compositions are charged with a narrative tension we've not heard before.

Dial Sun opens the album as an early morning call. Sounds flicker and flop, not a care in the world, amidst scraping and intimate electronics, escalating toward a frenzied outro. The subdued unwind of Granite follows on in a laminose exploration of metallic samples upon fragmented melody, fleeting and windswept as a lost memory. The hollow-sounding language of sputtering synthesizer and warped samples creates a rhythmic strangeness in the album's shortest piece, Salute.

Otherworldly overtones with a cooler feel characterize Mica where long elegant feedback slides between dissonant swells, thick and granular as though emerging from electronic canyons. Solareo is the album's major work at 13 minutes long, and invites the listener to meander through dense almost reggae like chord-beds, slow pulses and a raucous of bizarre synthetic glitches. The cyclic reprise of Dial Moon returns to the playfulness of the opening track with dancing rhythms and turbulent hooks. Tones like whispers fade into quietude, toward a silence warm and balsam.

Miki Yui's harnessing of solar energy, both materially and symbolically, feels like a joyous Salute to the sun in all its manifestations."

Oscilla - Suptnik Music November 2015

Miki Yui's music is best enjoyed loud - like, really *loud*. If her debut, *Small Sounds*, was any indication, Yui tends towards lowercase, shedding light on almost unnoticeable noises and revealing their intricate nature. In accordance, *Oscilla* balances electroacoustic ear candy with doctored field recordings, and can be wholly natural, fabricated, or somewhere in between where it really doesn't matter. For whatever reason, cranking the dial and placing yourself in solitude, circled in speakers, is ideal. *Oscilla* features some of the best tonal manipulation 2015 can attest to, teasing the peripherals. Rarely are any two moments the same, yet the album feels like a single organism despite the wide array of techniques. Within a span of sixty seconds, one could expect fluid dub, jar scrapes, wood blocks, piercing synths, and probably-mechanical-yet-possibly-real bird noises (attempting to describe the track "Acryla", here; most of these sounds really just need to be heard). Somehow, everything makes sense.

The style's best composers beg to speculate whether they poured over their projects compulsively, or erected them effortlessly; Yui's sounds are so carefree and openhanded, it's easy to forget it's been a half-decade since we last saw her. There's certainly a feeling of homecoming, and a bagful of spoils to show for her travels. Some of the concepts feel far-flung, yet harvested and packaged with care. Yui decorates the tracks passionately, with ornate details stitched and stowed in every possible inch of free space, yet without stifling anything. The titular "Oscilla" is surprisingly rhythmic, with acid-treated bass lines that pop with every string press. Follow-up "Animatoscope" takes note, delivering an infectious, groovy synth line before segueing beautifully into an whirl of nature sounds, synthetic applause, and an ear-tickling menagerie. As with the previous track, there's a special emphasis on that brief moment right before a string rings its note. A catalyst that often goes unnoticed - Miki Yui has always enjoyed spotlighting the little things.

Oscilla navigates a fairly compact format in a way that challenges its dimensions - meaning: within small runtimes, Yui maneuvers a slew of angles, covering ground that takes many artists twice as long to do so convincingly. She never really dwells on any sort of "sweet spot" - instead, the album flows freshly, ever-changing and always delightful. In what is a very asymmetrical listen, there always seems to be a balance between subtle nuances and immediately-rewarding hooks. Penultimate "Gumb" warps and loops, cutting off and glitching out; yet beneath the charming misfires are gingerly-placed instruments and soothing industrial hums. Closer "Namitayu" consolidates everything perfectly, both turbulent and serene. There's a sort of delicate tension, like waiting for the final leaf to drop - in Miki Yui's world, it falls like a sledgehammer.