

exposé

Exploring the Boundaries of Rock



Electric Mud — The Deconstruction of Light

(Bandcamp no#, 2018, CD / DL)

by Peter Thelen, Published 2018-12-11

The first four nodes of heavy distorted bass that pump out of your speaker to introduce the first track, "Deadend Mind," let you know immediately that Electric Mud means business, and in a big way. The trio of Hagen Bretschneider (bass, idea, sound concept), Jennart Huper (rhythm guitar), and Nico Walser (who plays all other instruments and sound alchemy, which apparently includes drums, keys, and lead guitar) at first seems like an odd division of duties on paper, but in practice it works wonderfully as that opening track which features drums, synths, piano, electronic percussion, and huge widescreen panoramic atmospheres attests as it approaches its 12 minute conclusion. Likewise, "Canary in a Cathouse" juxtaposes a beautiful soft piano intro with shredding guitar riffing, until bass, organ, and drums join in and make an intense statement, switching between soft passages and heavy guitar-driven mania over its eleven minutes. This is old school instrumental rock of the highest order: I am sometimes reminded of Eloy at their finest (circa *Floating*) or soundtrack-era Pink Floyd, but there is a very atmospheric component to it all that might remind listeners of TD's *Phaedra* or thereabouts. The big riff is a major part of every song, incisive, heavy, and very German, but there is still plenty of space for the dreamy stuff, all in abundance. There is a brilliant jazz guitar break on "Suburban Wasteland Blues" that immediately catches your attention, then falls back on the heavy guitar driven riff. Throughout the trio utilizes samples (voices, instruments, and more, as needed) to enhance the ideas they are already driving. "Heads in Beds" starts with a beautiful atmospheric element with tasty lead guitar, not unlike Pink Floyd's "Echoes," then slowly morphs into an atmospheric jazzy section, then a couple minutes later jumps into a sequenced synth romp that slowly introduces the bass, drums, and guitars all over again. Throughout the piece at certain points one hears the sampled child's voice calling out "Daddy, are you sleeping?" The entire album, but this track especially, packs an amazing amount of brilliant ideas that call on all of classic progressive rock's best instincts.

