



MX-80 SOUND Better Than Life

Label

FEEDING TUBE RECORDS

Format

LP

Catalog Number

FTR 761LP

UPC

769791986367



Store Price

\$16.39

Release Date

07/26/24

Territory

WORLDWIDE

Genre

FILE UNDER - M - ROCK

FEEDING TUBE RECORDS



DESCRIPTION

"**MX-80 Sound** are one of the foundational underground rock bands of the last half century. Formed in the university town of Bloomington IN in 1974, the original version came about when **Bruce Anderson** and **Dale Sophiea** (from **Screaming Gypsy Bandits**) teamed up with **Rich Stim** and **Dave Mahoney** (from **Chinaboise**), adding another couple of drummers for extra confusion. Things fluxxed and mutated for a while. MX-80 played the Bloomington Public Library and rehearsed a lot. They opened for **Patti Smith**, one drummer left and they recorded the great *Big Hits* EP in '76 for local label BRBQ. Reviewed in *Sounds* by **Carline Coons**, the EP got the band a deal by which UK Island licensed and released their equally great first album, *Hard Attack*, in '77. Another drummer left and MX-80 Sound moved to San Francisco, where they made a couple of amazing albums for the **Residents'** label, Ralph. Drummers changed, but Anderson, Stim and Sophiea remained fairly constant, and together they created a signature sound featuring massive repeating guitar riffs, biting angular rhythms and casually surreal vocals. Over the years they all did their own things, but regularly rehearsed together as MX-80, at which point things generally coalesced into an easily identifiable (impossibly to categorize) style. As great as their live sets were, they didn't tour often, but every time I saw them they were superb. And the recordings that came from their regular meet-ups are as brilliant as they are idiosyncratic. *Better Than Life* was recorded shortly before the death of Bruce Anderson, which assures it will be the final MX-80 studio album, and it's a wonderful testament to how long you can keep creating fresh and vital avant rock music without ever making any goddamn money doing it. *Better Than Life* sounds great. Anderson's guitar is a huge as ever, Stim's movie-oriented lyric inventions and wry delivery are as weirdly dead pan as could be, Dale Sophiea's bass defines the urgent edges of the songs, and the other players – guitarists **John Moreman** and **Jim Hrabetin**, bassist **Chris Xefos**, and drummer **Nico Sophiea** (son of Dale) – are spot-on. Together, they create a lovely, complex and intelligent mix of the wildest avant-prog/punk-rock hybrid you'll never hear again. As much as we'll miss MX-80 Sound, their legacy will live forever, and the crazy blend of elements they created with such unforced power should stand as a challenge to every new band that comes along. This album demonstrates it's indeed possible to create a unique sound for yourself with enough interior space you can explore its mysterious sonic corridors for almost 50 years. This should be enough to give us all hope, and we should offer thanks to MX-80 for creating such a fine and freaky aesthetic model. If more artists followed their path, we'd all live a much better world." –**Byron Coley**, 2024

TRACKLISTING

- A1. Conundrum (When Tully Flew The Coop)
- A2. Brutus (All For You)
- A3. Crusade (Never Too Late)
- A4. Off-Kilter
- A5. Mental (Sterling Hayden)
- A6. Scarecrow (Diabolique)
- A7. Pink Corduroy (Snowing In Amsterdam)
- B1. Tilt-A-Whirl
- B2. Jaunty (My Shirt Hates Me)
- B3. Courage (Gloria)
- B4. Buoyant (Emily)
- B5. Innocence (Little Murders)
- B6. Disappointment (Gone Fishing)

HIGHLIGHTS

- **MX-80 Sound** formed in the university town of Bloomington IN in 1974, when **Bruce Anderson** and **Dale Sophiea** (from **Screaming Gypsy Bandits**) teamed up with **Rich Stim** and **Dave Mahoney** (from **Chinaboise**).
- *Better Than Life* was recorded shortly before the death of Bruce Anderson, which assures it will be the final MX-80 studio album.
- MX-80 Sound create a lovely, complex and intelligent mix of wild avant-prog/punk-rock.

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