



NATURAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WITH EVAN PARKER

Descension (Out Of Our Constrictions)

Label

AGUIRRE RECORDS

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Territory

NORTH AMERICAN EXCLUSIVE

Genre

FILE UNDER - N - JAZZ

AGUIRRE

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DESCRIPTION

Rich in musical associations yet utterly singular in its voice, joyous with an inner tranquility, the music of **Natural Information Society** is unlike any other being made today. Their sixth album in eleven years for eremite records, *descension (Out of Our Constrictions)* is the first to be recorded live, featuring a set from London's Cafe OTO with veteran English free-improv great **Evan Parker**, & the first to feature just one extended composition. The 75-minute performance, inspired by the galvanizing presence of Parker, is a sustained bacchanalia of collective ecstasy. You could call it their party album.

This was the second time Parker played with NIS. Joshua Abrams: "Both times we played compositions with Evan in mind. I don't tell Evan anything. He's a free agent."

The music is focused & malleable, energized & even-keeled, drawing on concepts of ensemble playing common to musics from many locations & eras without any one specific aesthetic realization completely defining it.

"The rhythms that Mikel plays are not an exact reference to Chicago house, but that's in there," Abrams says. "I like to take a cyclic view of music history, can we take that four-on-the-floor, & consider how it connects to swing-era music? Can we articulate a through line? I dee-jayed for years in Chicago & lessons I learned from playing records for dancing inform how I think about the group's music. The listener can make connections to aspects of soul music, electronic music, minimalism, traditional folk musics, & other musics of the diaspora as well. It's about these aspects coming together. I don't need to mimic something, I need to embody it to get to the spirit, to get to the living thing."

For jazz fans, the sound of Parker's soprano & **Jason Stein**'s bass clarinet might evoke **Coltrane & Dolphy**, even though they didn't necessarily set out to do that & they play with complete individuality. Abrams sees a bridge to the historical precedent, too. "Since we first met in the 1990s, one of the things that Evan and I connected on was Coltrane's music," he says. "I hoped that we would tap into that sound world intuitively. In this case, I think that level of evocation adds another layer of depth, versus a layer of reference."

Indeed, this is a performance in which the connections among the ensemble & the creative tension between improvisation and composition build into a complex mesh of associations & interactions. While the band confines itself to the territory mapped out by Abrams' composition, they are remarkably attentive & responsive, making adjustments to Parker's improvisations. When Parker's intricate patterns of notes interweave with the band, the parts reinforce one another & the music rockets upward. Sometimes, Parker's lines are cradled by the group's gentle pulse & an unearthly lyrical balance is struck.

Drummer **Mikel Patrick Avery** is locked-in, playing with hellacious long-form discipline, feel & responsiveness. Jason Stein's animated, vocalized bass clarinet weaves in & out with **Lisa Alvarado**'s harmonium to state the piece's thematic material; the pulsing tremolo on the harmonium brings a **Spacemen 3** vibe to the party. Abrams ties together melody & rhythm on guimbri, a presence that leads without seeming to. Like his bandmates, he shifts modes of playing frequently, improvising & then returning to the composed structure.

"As specific as the composition is, the goal is to internalize it & mix it up," Abrams says. "The idea is to get so comfortable that we can make spontaneous changes, find new routes of activity, stasis & byways every gig. It's like a web we're spinning. If someone makes a move, we all aim to be aware of it, make room for it. Experiencing & listening is what it's about, & Evan supercharges that."

& "supercharged" is the word for this album. With Parker further opening up their music, *descension (Out of Our Constrictions)* is the sound of Natural Information Society growing both more disciplined and freer, one of the great bands of its time on a deep run.

Mastered by **Helge Sten**, Audio Virus, Oslo. Lacquers by Dubplates & Mastering. Liner Notes by **Theaster Gates**.

TRACKLISTING

01. Descension (Out Of Our Constrictions) (74:43)

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Natural Information Society**'s sixth album in eleven years for eremite records, *descension (Out of Our Constrictions)* is the first to be recorded live.
- Featuring a set from London's Cafe OTO with veteran English free-improv great **Evan Parker**, & the first to feature just one extended composition.
- The 75-minute performance, inspired by the galvanizing presence of Parker, is a sustained bacchanalia of collective ecstasy.
- Mastered by **Helge Sten**, Audio Virus, Oslo. Lacquers by Dubplates & Mastering. Liner Notes by **Theaster Gates**.

Also available:

(MTE 074-75LP) NATURAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WITH EVAN PARKER: *Descension (Out of Our Constrictions)* 2LP [769791978300]

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