

Synergy Magazine

Review Tear Sheet

Slope
Steve Jansen
Samadhi Sound
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Steve Jansen will not be a familiar name unless you have an interest in '80s art pop or spend time checking who plays backing instruments on experimental music albums. Jansen is David Sylvian's brother, Sylvian being the lead singer of Japan and, since the early '80s, has developed quite a reputation as an innovative and creative solo artist. Jansen has played drums and percussion on many of his brother's releases, as well as working with other ex-members of Japan in a variety of guises. This, however, is a unique Solo album from Jansen in which he has harnessed support from many around him.

Featuring guest vocalists who include his brother and long-time collaborator David Sylvian, and the sublime Nina Kinert, it is a beautiful electronic album featuring a range of different sounds; it is textured, minimalist and delicate.

The album opens with Grip, a minimalist saxophone and synth symphony, shot through towards

the end with subtle voices. Then we have the sleeplike sound of Sleepyard offering the superb vocals of Tim Elsenburg and a range of tracks which explore a variety of textures and sounds, with the expert use of atmospheric instrumentals creating a truly luxurious listening experience. Gap of Cloud is light and floats away and a A Way of Disappearing is haunting with a clarinet which seem to resonate long after it has been played.

Slope is a nicely structured album moving carefully through different textures and forms; it slowly envelops you in its atmosphere until you quietly drift away with its ambiance. This is a beautiful and innovative CD.

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