

## **PAT MASTELOTTO & MARKUS REUTER: „FACE“**

FACE is the latest release from drummer and percussionist Pat Mastelotto (**King Crimson, Stick Men, Mr. Mister**) and touch guitarist Markus Reuter (**Stick Men, Crimson ProjeKct, Tuner**).

Housed in an provocatively surreal cover featuring artwork by Tool's Adam Jones, FACE consists of just one 35 minute-long track FACE presents a musical travelogue rich in detail and panoramic in scope and scale, filled with contrasting scenes, dramatic landscapes and inspiring vistas.

Germany-based touch guitarist and composer of FACE, Markus Reuter says, "It's like a journey where you're mapping out where you're going but then as it gets underway you have no idea which people you're going to meet along the way, or what's going to happen."

Boasting sixteen guest contributors, including Steven Wilson, David Lynch collaborator Chrysta Bell and The Rembrandts' Danny Wilde, Reuter and Texas-based Pat Mastelotto, FACE has been nine years in the making.

With echoes of Mike Oldfield's melodicism, Crimsonsque complexities, churning bass that wouldn't be out of place in classic-era Yes and even languid Floyd-like soloing, the link to a progressive rock vocabulary is unmistakable.

Incorporating several different moods and personas during its intricately orchestrated duration, FACE is designed as a harmonic palindrome, looking both forward and backward. Ending as it begins with the ambient sound of an outdoors field recording, the listener is taken on a dramatic expedition in structure, rhythm, melody and harmony and then returned to the point of their departure.

Consisting of 385 bars of music, FACE is variously filled with tumbling percussives; radiant vocal harmonies; words intoned as if in some secret ritual; shimmering fuzzed guitars; waspish flights of stinging brass darting across fusillades of thunderous drums; surging keyboards whose lines ripple in spirals and mesh like gears into the rhythm tracks.

In the same way that an optical illusion challenges our perception, there are times when what appeared initially as intimate acoustic spaces suddenly empties out into arena-sized ambience, altering our impression of melody and aural space. Playful, exotic and diverse, it's a piece that despite its relative brevity is as ambitious as it is capacious.

Against Reuter's agile playing, Pat Mastelotto's drumming bristles with his trademark muscularity, driving and defining the various movements throughout, augmenting the composition with his distinctive and alchemical approach to electronica.

The musical telepathy and empathy Mastelotto and Reuter display stems from a partnership that goes all the way back to Totem, their first release as TUNER in 2005, and from there as bandmates, touring the world in Crimson ProjeKct and Stick Men.

"Pushing ourselves as artists was definitely an important part of the process," says Mastelotto, who regards this as probably the most challenging album to make in a recording career spanning more than four decades. Recording sessions for FACE took place between 2007 and 2011, although as Mastelotto recalls, the first three days involved the pair inputting data to create the necessary algorithms before either of them played a note.

With over 200 audio tracks divided into a fine grid into which guest musicians were invited to overdub their parts as written or in some cases improvised, this is like no other record the pair have been involved in before.

With so much of the album's heavy lifting undertaken by the duo, the sonic palette was broadened with guest contributions. "I wanted something organic going on," Mastelotto explains. That's why there's all sorts of different instruments appearing; strings, trombone, banjo and so on. Instead of getting those sounds on a synth we wanted to give it a little human touch."

Where does the title FACE come from? Is it an appropriation of the word the French use for a side of an LP? the resolve to see something through no matter how difficult? A surface; an expression of the different facets we show to the world - who we are, where we've been and where we are going?

Perhaps the palindromic harmonic structure provides a clue. "We have the notes F, A, C, and E as a theme within the piece. The idea was to play with the idea that you can look at a piece of music from different sides. It's all deep, heady stuff!" laughs Reuter.

In the end what truly matters is the ebb and flow of the music, the sounds experienced and sights evoked throughout its 35 minutes. "Imagine looking at a piece of fractal art. In a way, that's sort of what the music of FACE is, opening out in a very fractalised way," offers Mastelotto.

FACE is concerned with opening up the heart and the head and connecting to something larger than any individuals involved in its creation.

For Markus FACE represents the sum of all his musical experience to date, calling upon the entire body of compositional techniques. Summing up, Reuter explains, "FACE is very much a special piece in the body of my work. I don't think there's anything else quite like this out there today"

### **Line Up:**

**Markus Reuter** (picture left):

Touch Guitars, Bass Guitar, Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitars, Melodica, Grand Piano, Banjo, Bulbul Tarang, Omnichord, Synthesizers

**Pat Mastelotto** (picture right):

Acoustic and Electronic Drums, Percussives, Programming

**Pat Mastelotto & Markus Reuter**

**FACE**

**SPV 80602 CD, iTunes with booklet**

**Label: Tempus Fugit TF VÖ 41**

**Release: End of March 2017**