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Listening with extreme prejudice

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Audio-Visuals

FAUST IMPRESSIONS

Directed by Directed by Werner Diermaier
(Zick Zack/Hit Thing)

The name Faust is legendary in underground/experimental music circles. One of the original bands that fell under the heading "Krautrock" (a term coined by the British press), the pioneering German ensemble has been developing its distinctive psychedelic sound for over 30 years. **Faust Impressions** is its first DVD, a collection of Faust songs old and new, remixed and given added percussion and original music videos by band principal Zappi W. Diermaier.



I've read about Faust over the years, but have never gotten around to tracking down its records. So **Faust Impressions** is an ideal way to finally hear this music. I have to say, it's not what I expected. I'd been led to believe the group's sound was based almost purely on found instruments, scrap metal and junk percussion, and while there is indeed some of that present, most of the music was created on standard rock instruments (guitar, organ, bass, etc.). Also, while there's little here that could be called pop, it's not really the avant-garde noisemaking I was expecting. Instead, most of the tunes sound like what most people think when they hear the phrase "Krautrock:" repetitive, trancelike melodies and arrangements that slowly build by adding elements playing simple licks or chord sequences, until the piece becomes a mesmerizing mantra. Most of it is very much like Faust's contemporary Can. The opening "D-machine," a track from the 80s with a rhythm based around the clang of a printing press, is an excellent example of the sound of both the band and the genre. 1972's "Waiting For Eternity," 1971's "Component" and 1994's "Listen" also scratch the trance/psych itch quite nicely. "Ice Rain," a remix of the 1972 Faust track "It's a

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Rainy Day, Sunshine Girl," is almost a pop song, as it features a vocal melody, a more obvious tune and even some harmonies. "Video Skin," formerly the 1973 tune "Sad Skinhead," is almost a folk song. No one's likely to mistake either for something Casey Kasem would program, however.

The images are blends of videotaped footage (mostly nature scenes and peopewatching, with the occasional animals and machines thrown in) and deliberately crude computer imaging. Some of it follows the theme of the cut—"Ice Rain" features shot after shot of frozen grass, trees, earth, etc.—but much of it is related only in Diermaier's mind. Which is fine—if someone's going to insert pre-packaged imagery into these tunes, better it be one of the original creators of the music than some pretentious director's "interpretation."

Just to sweeten the pot, **Faust Impressions** also includes a bonus CD of tracks Diermaier intends to include on his next DVD project. The songs range from industrial percussion workouts to accordion-led waltzes (interrupted by sax and noises). Not bad. *Michael Toland* [[buy it](#)]



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