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July 6, 2005

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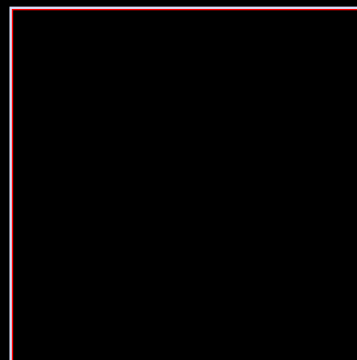
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Faust: Impressions (DVD)

Caveat emptor: the patient reader should keep in mind that *Impressions* is my first ever encounter with the music of Faust, (I don't know how either) and that my impressions may or may not accurately reflect the true nature of the music.



Experimental, dense, industrial, quirky and certainly not for all tastes, the *Impressions* DVD consists of eleven tracks from the lengthy career of Germany's most impenetrable export and adds equally challenging visual material to the mix. According to band leader Zappi W. Diermaier, many of the songs have been remixed, rerecorded and even retitled in some cases. For anyone unfamiliar with Faust, think of them as the musical equivalent to the films of Kenneth Anger. Much of the band's music relies heavily on cut and paste editing, sort of like what Frank Zappa did on the *Lumpy Gravy* album, but taken to a much more provocative extreme.

Each song is accompanied with avant-garde video that is surreal, trippy and disturbing. "D-Machine" for example, consists of industrial percussive sounds, with a rhythm constructed from the sound of a printing press machine and layered with honking saxophones, voices and sound effects. "Kraut", the video that finishes the collection, is an 11 minute blast of sonic weirdness over a visual collage of animals, humans, machinery and pop culture, but filtered with distortion, infrared film effects, and camcorder tricks that are alternately interesting and annoying. Pieces like "Ice Rain" and "Video Skin" almost resemble songs in the accepted sense, but not quite what one could call accessible. The former is a bit like The Velvet Underground with perhaps a touch of Syd Barrett while the latter appears to be a kind of humorous homage to punk rock. The 12 minute "Listen" veers towards "A Saucerful of Secrets" territory with its hypnotic trance-y effects, tribal repetitious percussion, spacey synthesizer and chants of "listen to the fish". The only vintage footage of the band we get is an introductory video of a guy in a polar bear suit who visits the band at their recording studio: at least that's what I got out of it.

Obviously, I'm no expert on Faust but I imagine many fans are going to find *Impressions* exhilarating. The DVD is thoroughly challenging and I'm sure those who like the more exploratory side of progressive music will be rewarded for their time. *Impressions* is accompanied by a



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27 minute CD soundtrack to an upcoming video project and the music is every bit as dense as that of the DVD. Yes indeed, Faust are a progressive band in the truest sense of the word.

DVD Contents

1. D-Machine
2. Ice Rain
3. Breakfast
4. Waiting for Eternity
5. Video Skin
6. Desert
7. Component
8. Listen
9. We Need You
10. Irena
11. Kraut

Bonus CD Track Listing

1. Back of China
2. Hamburg Walzer
3. I Spin
4. Virtual Reality

Added: May 8th 2005

Reviewer: [Steve Pettengill](#)

Score: ★★★★★

Related Link: [Zappi W Diermaier Web Page](#)

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