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## Mythos: Surround Sound Evolution

Mythos was and is the '70s German space rock band formed by Stephan Kaske, who now operates as the sole entity behind the name since the original line-up folded in 1980. Kaske's more recent ventures have been entirely electronic, though he avoids pigeon-holing as either a Berlin School or Dusseldorf School purist — the



frameworks for the former and latter popularized by Tangerine Dream & Klaus Schulze, and Kraftwerk & Neu!, respectively. The compositions on *Surround Sound Evolution* are fashioned with truly exquisite sonic colors that add breadth which is noticeably absent from the music of other synthesists of Kaske's ilk. This isn't a Mellotron or MiniMoog exhibition, but the overtly digital sounds are lush and expansive. The very first track has a five-note pattern which locks into the listener's brain and opens a cosmic gate to inner space. Stylistically the album is a rhythm-charged hybrid of *Oxygene/Equinoxe*-era Jean-Michel Jarre and *Albedo 0.39/Spiral*-era Vangelis paired with the Teutonic structures of classic Tangerine Dream.

As a continued testament to new and exciting cosmic-style electronic progressive music, Mythos' *Surround Sound Evolution* deserves a space between Ian Boddy and Tangerine Dream and every other pioneering e-music peer in-between. Kaske invokes many shades of the German electronic canon, from the robotic chant that opens the album to the restrained beauty of "Mythosiaka" that Tangerine Dream was once capable of when Johannes Schmoelling and Christoph Franke were members. "Perpetuum Mythos" is space incarnate, but

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not turbulence-free ambient space, as it is far too nuanced and eventful to be relegated to ambient with its ascendant chords and suspect house-beat break near the three-minute mark. "Filter Sequence Wah Flute" does feature some adequately 'Tron-esque reverberated flute samples, and with the shifting, percolating mast sequence the track does fulfill the definition of Berlin School. The two-part "Free Panda" movement is closer to the far eastern atmosphere that Vangelis approximated with his landmark late 1970s album *China*. "Mytho Space" is a sagely crafting of spatial and melodic structures with an uncannily perfect mix-balance of numerous sequenced, key-driven and knob-manipulated timbres — think of it as the big brother of "Remote Viewing" from Tangerine Dream's *Exit*.

The nearly eighty-minute long *Evolution*-ary cycle concludes with a pair of bonus tracks. An uptempo drive and interlaced sequences lend "Das Zeitgeheimnis (Part-3)" a cinematic flair. Kaske goes symphonic with a live recording titled "Fukushima Sea," an ode marked by mutated whale songs and an overture-like grandeur that that gradually yields to all things ominous.

Over four decades later, Stephan Kaske continues to hone his vision and delivers another bang-up platter of timely electronic music. With the best output from the Tangerine Dream camp coming from former members and the winding down of Klaus Schulze's output, Mythos is a vehicle that deserves the sort of unwavering attention his peers have enjoyed for over forty years.

Tracks:

1. Surround Sound Passion 4.14
2. Roots And Rocks 5.29
3. Mythosiaka 4.49
4. Heart Of The Action 4.50
5. Jinba Ittai 7.16
6. Perpetuum Mythos 5.23
7. Filter Sequence Wah Flute 8.30
8. Free Panda! (Part-1) Caged 3.18
9. Free Panda! (Part-2) The Liberation 6.50
10. Mytho Space 8.47
- Bonus Tracks:
11. Das Zeitgeheimnis (Part-3) 5.33
12. Fukushima Sea (Live) 8.21

**Added:** July 18th 2013

**Reviewer:** Elias Granillo

**Score:** ★★★★★

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