

THE WIRE

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Radian

Chimeric

Thrill Jockey CD/Download

Over the last decade Austrian unit Radian have released a trickle of albums working loosely within the structures of post-rock – a designation strengthened by having John McEntire produce their *rec. extern* album of 2002 and releasing their last two albums on Thrill Jockey.

Chimeric, their fourth album, straddles the line between spontaneous live performance and controlled, sequenced events. The raw material of the album was recorded in Radian's rehearsal space. The drums, guitar and bass are twisted into a spare, naked wiry sound that darkens the whole album into a noirish tone. Some of these trio passages of electric free jazz remain almost unaltered, as on the longest track "Feedbackmikro/City Lights" which quietly prowls the long shadows of a city on its way to a muted assignation. The album at times becomes silent, with only the strangled breath of an acoustic guitar to be heard, as on "Chimera", or raises itself up on a roil of drums and cymbals like a fog enveloping the back streets at dusk.

However, on other tracks, the elements are spliced, sequenced and controlled into glitches and sonic ephemera. "Git Cut Noise" splutters from fragments and shards of accidental guitar sounds and amplifier buzz before building into a wall of sound. Its twin, "Git Cut Variant", is a brief essay written with the same glitches, but this time resulting in an atmospheric blues.

The two tracks "Kinetak" and "Subcolours" make the most of this meeting between control and chaos. "Kinetak" falters along like a film projector with a broken sprocket, ticking and fractured, an impatient urban Krautblues. "Subcolours" is lost in a mirrored room of guitar glitches, its rhythmic pulse agitated and conspiratorial.

Nick Southgate