

Lorin Morgan-Richards- An Occurrence Remembered

Contributed by Matthew Johnson
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ARTIST: Lorin Morgan-Richards
ALBUM: An Occurrence Remembered
LABEL: Self-released
REVIEWER: Matthew J.
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Like his first album, this release from Lorin Morgan-Richards originally formed the soundtrack to a multimedia dance performance. Taking several of Ambrose Bierce's Civil War ghost stories as its central theme, this release isn't quite as good a fit with Morgan-Richards' penchant for classic synthesizer music as his previous release, which was more inspired by the UFO mysticism of Zechariah Sitchin, but as a songwriter and producer he's come a long way. Less reliant on primitive echoing effects, Morgan-Richards' clean, wistful vocals add a bittersweet pop touch to "You Hold My Heart" and "Was It Something I Said?," and if his voice on "Abbey" doesn't quite hold up to the song's club-friendly breakbeats and pulsing electronics, the multi-layered production certainly helps smooth things over. While the first half of this album has a lighthearted quality that will appeal to fans of early synthpop, the second half sinks into the sort of dreariness one would usually expect from Bierce himself; "The Battle" is bleak soundtrack material, all slowly marching drums and massive echoing church bells, and the morbid "Lifeless Crawling Shells" is like Morgan-Richards' take on Depeche Mode's "Flies on the Windscreen." While this album has its occasional amateurish moments, it's a much stronger effort than we've previously seen from Morgan-Richards, and fans of ambitious, story-driven synthpop would be well-advised to give this a listen.

Visit Lorin Morgan-Richards at www.lorinrichards.com.