

THE PROPER ORNAMENTS
MISSION BELLS



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CD / LP / Digital

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9 months since the release of 'Six Lenins', THE PROPER ORNAMENTS are back with 'Mission Bells', a sombre but uplifting record that began its life while they were on tour earlier this year, when new ideas emerged in different soundchecks around Europe.

James Hoare, Bobby Syme and Max Oscarnold, the founders of the group, recruited Nathalie Bruno as a bassist for the tour, and then the four-piece began recording in the summer at Hoare's home studio in Finsbury Park, London, using the same 16 track Studer tape machine as on their previous record, but this time they incorporated a moog sequencer and other electronics instruments.

On these recordings, meticulous attention to detail is never deployed as an end in itself but always with the song and sound in mind. As the 'Mission Bells' sing, echoes of black albums Velvets, Swell Maps, Spiritualized and Cluster might reach inside your brain, but the truth is that it's hard to pinpoint influences on an album that is the fifth in the life of this band, as they have been becoming more and more themselves, not needing to look elsewhere for inspiration.

This is not a retro band, they just happened to like playing guitar, a preference that began, at least for James Hoare and Max Oscarnold, when they were 9 years old. Whoever is familiar with their previous records might agree that 'Mission Bells' has a lot of the innocent elements (drum machines underneath simple songs) of their first record, 'Waiting For The Summer', the melancholy of 'Foxhole' and their heavy live sounds, as drummer Bobby Syme points out. But it's the lyrical maturity that is the real achievement on this record. The words can be read as a William Burroughs cut up experiment on what it is to live in these Dystopian times.

'Mission Bells' is a majestic achievement, a musical maelstrom, its harmonies drawing the inclined listener into an irreversible somnambulant state, caught between dreamland and waking hours. The beauty of it is, you won't want to escape, even though the door is flung open as your postmodern life awaits you outside...

Tracklisting

1. Purple Heart
2. Downtown
3. Black Tar
4. The Wolves At The Door
5. Broken Insect
6. The Impeccable Lawns
7. Echoes
8. Flophouse Calvary
9. Strings Around Your Head
10. The Park
11. Music Of The Traffic
12. Cold
13. Tin Soldiers



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