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Van Hunt, What Were You Hoping For?

APR 23, 2012 / WRITTEN BY RUSSELL NICHOLS



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Posted by:
Zhaleh Boyd



You're spiraling around the rings of Saturn in a runaway rock 'n' roller coaster with your hands in the air while getting head from your new girlfriend, who's been around the four-dimensional block because she happens to be a time machine.

You're playing hopscotch in high heels on a minefield of materialism praying that one day you'll "blow up."

You're searching for your lost self in a haunted maze of sponsored hallucinations.

You're dying live.

You're diving in the echoes of tomorrow's regrets with a harpoon gun that shoots Cupid's arrows into the precious darkness, which bears a striking resemblance to the contours of your heart.

You're spinning out of control, freak.

You're trippin' on a sonic expedition created by Van Hunt on his fourth full-length LP, What Were You Hoping For?, a loopy 11-track genre-melding joyride that moves at the speed of psychedelic soul.

You're thanking God almighty that his last album, Popular, was officially shelved so he would escape those corporate tentacles to put together this collage of cosmic equations.

You're orbiting such ideas as the Harmony of the Spheres, the theory attributed to Pythagoreans which proposes that heavenly bodies move in harmony according to a numerical scheme.

You're absorbing the rough translation of Stephen Hawking's No Boundary Proposal ("The boundary condition of the universe is that it has no boundary.") into Van Hunt's eerie piano keys, harsh guitar riffs, synth bass, rumbling drums and reverb.

You're buzzing for lightyears.

You're experiencing tunnel vision in technicolor.

You're channeling David Bowman at Jupiter moving beyond the infinite.

You're reflecting.

You're wondering why, unlike Van Hunt, so many artists seem stuck in perpetual denial of personal freedom, which French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre calls "bad faith."

You're asking yourself if you lie to yourself, too.

You're admitting that you just did just now.

You're contemplating your capacity for transcendence.

You're putting "transcend" on your to-do list and getting back to Van Hunt's fusion of gospel-punk future-funk.

You're picturing Sun Ra, David Bowie, Jimi Hendrix, Curtis Mayfield and Prince podracing through the dusty, crusty channels of Valles Marineris on Mars.

You're spelunking in the volcanoes of silent memories, actively seeking all the words left unsaid.

You're reminiscing over loved ones lost in space.

You're taking meteor showers with a teary-eyed Isis while her husband's resting in pieces.

You're indulging in mental masturbation.

You're blowing a fuse in your overstimulated nervous system because you forgot to plug in your 1.21-jiggawatt adapter.

You're carving the initials of you and your girlfriend (T.M.) into the tree of life and constructing a treehouse in the branching universe theory while watching her strip at sunset.

You're questioning the possibility of an alternate reality, where another version of you chose a different major or mate or favorite Mortal Kombat character.

You're beating yourself up (mirror match) because you've been playing it safe since forever out of fear of fatality.

You're fighting the forces of your censor, that snaggle-tooth dragon guarding the mouth of the cave to your subconscious.

You're looking too Sly to be stoned.

You're thrashing against the undercurrent events of the mainstream and wading in the troubled waters within.

You're doing the electric slide on the 50-yard line of the Superdome after getting evicted from your comfort zone.

You're phoning home with a new unlimited plan.

You're finding insight in spite of the economic outlook.

You're occupying the streets of your insecurities in poetic protest and inhibiting the inhibitions that used to occupy your thoughts.

You're following the urge to follow your bliss in the footsteps of this singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, whose eclectic opus recalls Ovid's Metamorphoses: "Nothing retains its own form; but Nature, the greater renewer, ever makes up forms from forms. Be sure there's nothing perishes in the whole universe; it does but vary and renew its form."

You're climbing toward the climax.

You're cresting as the sun rises.

You're stuttering as you recite the words of that old Negro spiritual quoted in King's speech.

You're jumping down the spiral stairway to heaven, doing the splits like the Nicholas Brothers.

You're surrendering to Einstein's General Theory of Relativity.

You're coming down.

You're falling free.

You're feeling the effects of future shock plugged into your system, reverberating in regions both nether and stellar.

You're returning to the station with a souvenir from Saturn's rings in the shape of an epiphany.

You're restarting the album again from the beginning.

3 Comments

trhumatic May 5, 2012 @ 8:05 pm

who are you russell nichols? this is the most dynamic review of the most dynamic album i have heard in a long long long time. ima post this again and again.

REPLY

russell May 10, 2012 @ 1:42 am

Most definitely, this one flew in under the radar, but the eclecticism on display is undeniable. Van Hunt is that dude. I appreciate the love, trhumatic.

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