

Hélène Breschand & Elliott Sharp - Chansons du Crépuscule (2017)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Extase* 2 *La Langue Dans Ma Bouche* 3 *Je T'aime Tant* 4 *Ne Lui Dis Rien* 5
Goutte A Goutte 6 *The Cuckoo* 7 *Amor* 8 *Le Bloque Cri* 9 *Nouveau Monde* 10 *Le*
Dernier Mot 11 *Chose Rose* Guitar – Elliott Sharp Harp, Vocals – Hélène Breschand

Chansons du Crépuscule -“songs of dusk”- is a collection of original songs and interpretations recorded in Paris by New York guitarist/composer Elliott Sharp and French harpist and vocalist Hélène Breschand. The music on the disc was inspired by the music of Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg presumably including their classic 1969 recording *Je t’aime...moi non plus*, whose title, if not its period pop sound, finds an oblique echo in Sharp and Breschand’s “*Je t’aime Tant*”. *Chansons du Crépuscule* tends more toward an angular, hard-edged expressionism carrying the strong imprint of Sharp’s sonic alchemy and Breschand’s Dadaesque vocals. But they can switch registers at will, as the softly melancholy “*Le Dernier Mot*” shows; diverseness is the other side of their virtuosity. --- Daniel Barbiero, *Avant Music News*

Elliott Sharp needs no introduction. He is one of leading forces of the downtown scene in New York, since the end of the 70s releasing stuff on his own Zoar Records label. His list of releases is an endless one, and must contain many dozens of albums. I don’t know much of his whereabouts of the last decade, but as this new release illustrates, he is still an active musician, always open for new projects. “*Chanson du Crépuscule*” is a collaboration with French harpist, composer and improviser Hélène Breschand. Their collaboration has a history I learn, but this is their first recording as a duo. Recordings took place in a Paris studio in 2014. Obvious for their songs Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg were a source of inspiration. This is very evident in “*Je t’aime*”. In the opening track the singing by Breschand come close to Diamnda Galas-like extravaganza. But in most of the songs she sings with a soft voice, with a bit overacting in her

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performance. Sharp concentrates on guitars of course, and a diversity of tools and instruments (drum machine?) for creating ambient-like textures and backgrounds to Breschands performance of the lyrics, which she almost all wrote. Also most of the songs are written by the two of them, but carry above all the handwriting of Sharp. "The Cuckoo", is a traditional, a bluesy song sung with the deep voice of Sharp. Qualities of Sharp and Breschand make a good match, and result in an entertaining album. ---Dolf Mulder, Vital Weekly, publiceysore.com

Ce disque d'une petite heure est le fruit de la sublime rencontre créative d'Hélène Breschand et d'Elliott Sharp enregistrée en une journée de mai 2014. Sur Chansons du Crépuscule la harpiste et le guitariste entrecroisent leurs cordes avec sensibilité, soubresauts et effets, et s'adonnent tous deux à des expressions vocales captivantes. L'alchimie fonctionne tout au long de l'album et donne corps à un ensemble naturellement bâti, évoquant tantôt la force éruptive d'une cérémonie chamanique et tantôt le récit intimiste. La voix d'Hélène Breschand emploie diverses nuances, passe sans heurt du chuchotement au râle, du récit susurré aux distorsions vocales plaintives en français, anglais et en des langues non identifiées, d'Europe de l'Est peut-être, voire inventées au vol. Elliott Sharp pose sa voix grave, en anglais et en français, dans un style mi-parlé mi-chanté sur quelques titres, en particulier sur le thème traditionnel "The Cuckoo", titre qui se rapproche le plus de la définition ordinaire du mot "chanson". Sur le titre "Le Dernier Cri" les vocalises ensorcelantes d'Hélène Breschand précèdent la redoutable voix grave d'Elliott Sharp qui s'exprime là en français. Chansons du Crépuscule trouve un bel équilibre entre expressions vocales et parties instrumentales librement égrenées, les unes venant structurer les autres au fil de l'intuition du moment capté. C'est ce qui fait tout le charme mystérieux de ce disque. --- neospheres.free.fr

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