

ESMA – The Last/Lost Atoms (2012)

A Young up and comer with over 20 albums already behind him releases new minimalist epic in March.

With the possibilities of the internet slowly being harnessed, we have come into a golden age where the modern day composer can actually get his stuff 'out there' with little interference or fuss from outdated record labels and you and I can discover this wonderful music with just a tiny bit of effort....Which brings us to this **album** about to be released into the great 'out there' in the **first week of March**.

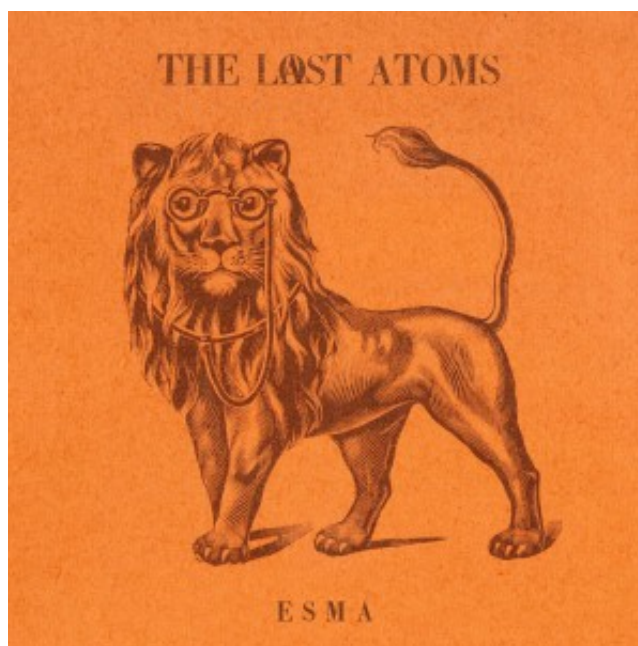


ESMA-eye protection not included

Eugenio Squarcia (*an Italian guy*), or **ESMA** as he is professionally known was born in 1984 (*just a young guy!*). He is described as a writer, illustrator and versatile artist and is also an architect. He has been involved in projects of one sort or another all over the world including the video arts. But what we're focusing on here is his **experimental modern music** efforts.

He plays the **piano** from a young age and also can operate a **cello** and all sorts of **electronic** doo-dads. His stated influences range between Clint Mansell, Phillip Glass, Brian Eno, **Johann Johannsson**, and I can detect, maybe the odd influence from **Jean Michel Jarre**, maybe a bit of Morricone, some of his other stuff, I hear traces of John Cage, The Clark and Ware Experiment,,,,.

ESMA – The Last/Lost Atoms



On March 9, 2012, his **23rd digital album**, available [Here](#) (Where you can sample all his other albums and read a more detailed biography by clicking on one of the albums) and the **first** to be released as a **physical artifact** available [Here](#) (I guess a Facebook based label) will be unleashed to you, the discerning music consumer.

So, Wotsit Like?

This album probably would be included under the minimalism umbrella and uses simple/complex **repetitive** figures utilising the sounds of some percussive **cello-ing**, **piano** and **electronic** jiggery-pokery. And under a lot of the pieces are **ambient field noises**. It's a pleasant listen on the headphones in the dark. Often very **'spacious'** sounding. Some of the **pieces** take their **time to develop** and come to a natural resolution and others are like a **'quick, short, sharp shock'** with a jarring beginning and a sudden ending.

There are aspects of the album that do **take you beyond just repeating figures**. Some **tracks** are **very dense** but then release comes in the next piece which is very **open and airy**. And now and then a melody sneaks in to pleasantly surprise you. It's a sort of an oddly moody sounding album but with a ray of hope (*how poetic am I*). It's also got a very **cinematic** sound to a lot of it and it could be a great soundtrack album. **A movie for your ears**. I do like this album.

There purports to be some sort of **concept** to this album (*it would be wrong if there wasn't*). This is (I think) the **composer's own ideas** behind the music on this project:

Come you lost atoms to your centre draw, And be the Eternal Mirror that you saw, rays that have wandered

into darkness wide, Return and back into your sun subside.

The idea of "The Lost Atoms" comes from these few lines which are found in "Il Verbo degli Uccelli (Mantiq at-tair)" a Persian poem written in 1177 by Farid ud-Din Attar. The "Lost Atoms" or "The Last Atoms", a single letter can change everything and the title becomes ambiguous. In fact, the 13 songs in this album are ambiguous: the last atoms, lost at the edge of existence, adrift from energy where everything loses its true dimension and remains naked without shape. A trip by yourself towards yourself, a perfect circle, looking for a road leading to the central atom, Xibalba. The door to somewheres else. A labyrinth. A pebbled road, Light and shadow chasing each other. Seasons. Sounds. Noise. First broken up and then in order. A string quartet, piano, synthesizer and others, many instruments. The titles of the songs suggest their nature, Amongst them there are fragments of some of William Butler Yeats' poems, of his rapport with the Earth. Then, the return. Like a storm in a bathtub. A glance through a window shows you importance, diversity, pure concept. The Imperfects. The Almost Adapted. We are them. The "Last Atoms". Minds searching for the edge of quantistic reality. Nearing the Pnuematic Void, where evreything stops. There matter becomes particular and static. Observation of a cosmic explosion, where all the elements are separated. Music doesn't only mean listening, but also transformation. The sound takes the mind towards other memories. The secret of this trip is in simplicity. It proceeds backwards. Intense. Full. Empty. Moments. And only the primordial silence remains.

Heady stuff. I don't go into it that deeply because I just draw my own conclusions, but others seem to like this way of having ideas presented to them.

Is this album destined to be a classic? I don't know. Time will tell. **It's not perfect.** But then you must understand, that is the nature of **contemporary/experimental** music. An inventor has to invent a load of stuff that doesn't work before he lands on the big idea that does work. This **album does work very well** but with the inevitable flaws of experimentation. But that being said, I **really like** some of the sounds and ideas he presents on this record and on some of his past efforts. It's not "*paint by numbers*" modern music. He has his **own** vision.

I won't tell you where I thought it was imperfect, because it will cloud your view when you listen to it and it's only my opinion anyway. So this album may be **your** holy grail. But for the record, I do like this album. **I will listen to it more than once!** But the music does sound like it's produced by a "*young*" composer who still needs time to develop and mature in order to attain the vision he has. And it sounds like he will.

ESMA is only going to be 28 years old and already has a impressive back catalogue. But the big difference between rock musicians and composers is that the rock star usually peaks somewhere in his 20s and over time becomes lame, whereas the composer usually keeps **progressing and learning and growing.** Being that he's so young but prolific, his **best work is definitely yet to come.** And this **album is a worthy stop** along that journey.