

Estasy *Wild Songs*



Estasy is the musical alias of Rome, Italy-based installation and performance artist **Emiliano Maggi**. After a few cassettes and CD-Rs, Estasy is releasing its full-length debut, **Locus Solus**, on Acéphale (SALEM, Elite Gymnastics, How To Dress Well).

Locus Solus doesn't sound like anything else, but it contains echoes from disparate sources. The first thing you'll notice is Maggi's voice, which has the range and timbre of an Italian Coloratura singer. Unlike many of today's high-octave singers, this is not a falsetto; it's a soprano. Maggi is never forthcoming on the techniques and effects he employs to drive his vocals to superhuman registers – but somehow the recordings manage to find a place between the grounded and otherworldly. Sometimes it appears stark and alone, sometimes buried underneath ghostly vocal overdubs. **Locus Solus** sounds nothing like Norwegian black metal, but the mood that his music evokes is perhaps closest to the feeling of that genre's obsession with death and romantic angst.

The songs on **Locus Solus** are varied in their instrumentation, with Maggi's stunning vocals being the one constant. "**Wild Wants**" is one of the few tracks on the album built around an electronic beat—the simplest of 4/4 bass drum/snare one-offs—with single string acoustic guitar lines played in straight eighth notes throughout. Maggi dissolves this skeletal arrangement in an alchemic stew of echoed vocals, nature sounds, and a faint, warbling drone.

Other tracks are more stripped down: Maggi's voice, a couple of overdubbed backing vocals, and an acoustic guitar, ukulele, or mandolin. "**Buried Me**" appropriately buries the arrangement in ambient field recordings, while "**Kaspar**" drives forward with intensity, attempting to outrun recordings of animal howls. Highlight "**I Saw a Chapel of Gold**" dispenses with these conceits and presents just an idyllic folk song in 6/8 time. This is the heart of the album, Maggi channeling lost traditions with melancholy, fully foreseeing the impossibility of the task but with an absolute conviction that he will succeed.

Locus Solus has a haunting quality that derives spiritually from Maggi's recording process. All but three tracks on the album were recorded en plein air: amongst nature in fields and woods. The sounds of wind and nature, and Maggi's tape recorder, blend into his spectral soprano to create a mythological world that modern civilization can no longer see, but which through acts of the imagination we might be able to hear.

The result is something like Alan Lomax's field recordings trapped in Werner Herzog's *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*. Reference points include the Nordic folk music traditions currently being kept alive by acts such as Dvergmál, the lost memories evoked in William Basinski's Disintegration Loops, the sublime other-worlds given birth to by Sigur Rós's made up language, and most notably the proto-gothic funereal dirge of Nico's post-*Chelsea Girls* trilogy of *The Marble Index*, *The End*, and *Desertshore*.

- 01 Daymoves
- 02 Buried Me
- 03 Wonder
- 04 I Saw A Chapel Of Gold
- 05 It's A Hard World For Little Things
- 06 Kaspar
- 07 Locus Solus
- 08 Wild Wants
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CATALOG: ACE024
ARTIST: Estasy
TITLE: Wild Songs
GENRE: Alternative/Folk
STREET DATE: November 13, 2012
FORMAT: CD Digipak & 12" LP

LP Limited Edition of 1000 (First 500 on White Vinyl)
Reverse Board Sleeve with Gold Foil Stamping

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NON-EXPORTABLE
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