

Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith & Suzanne Ciani—FRKWYS Vol. 13: Sunergy

Sunergy brings together synthesists **Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith** and **Suzanne Ciani** for the thirteenth installment of **FRKWYS**, RVNG Intl.'s intergenerational collaboration series. For this edition, a panorama of the Pacific Coast provides the place and head space for a musical appreciation and consideration of a life-giving form vast and volatile with change.

Fortuitously (as is the freaky way), Smith and Ciani were discovered to be neighbors in the small coastal community of Bolinas, California. The two had become close friends, bonding over their experience as woman musicians and, more unusually, their shared passion for the Buchla synthesizer. The music of *Sunergy* embraces this kinship, with Smith and Ciani respectively performing on the Buchla 200 E and the Buchla Music Easel, two modern configurations of the innovative instrument developed in the '60s by **Don Buchla**.

Sunergy was recorded in the Bolinas home where Ciani has lived for the last twenty-four years. Her living room overlooks the Pacific Ocean from a cliffside perch, creating an idyllic, inspired setting for music making. Setting up their synths side-by-side, Ciani and Smith took turns keeping time and freely improvising for the album sessions.

As a complete piece, *Sunergy* is shaped by slow, pulsing forms and sinuous, melodic sequences that conjure both an oceanic world and the unlimited sound made possible by modular processing.

Despite the serene setting where *Sunergy* was realized, the album does not romanticize a complete oneness with nature. Smith and Ciani use their collaborative ground to reflect on the unstable forces at play across the Bolinas horizon. *Sunergy* takes stock of Bolinas in the 21st century, a once-thriving artist's refuge now vulnerable to real estate pressure extending from affluent San Francisco, and more irreparably, the specter of climate change erasing its many waterfront habitats.

A diametric dynamic is present in *Sunergy*; a somber meditation amidst the intense cultural and solar forces transforming the landscape, and a hopeful assertion of the surviving creative culture of Bolinas. Far from rehashing the gentle grace of the artists' seminal works, *Sunergy* instead seeks to awaken and bear witness, employing the Buchla waveforms to mirror the infinite rhythms of the ocean and our essential relationship to it.

Points of Interest

- Hometown: Bolinas, California
- RIYL: Michael Stearns' *Planetary Unfolding*, Buchla synthesizers, environmental activism / agency
- The thirteenth installment of the ongoing FRKWYS intergenerational collaboration series
- The first original music from **Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith** following the acclaimed release of her third album, *Ears*
- The first synthesizer recordings from **Suzanne Ciani** outside of the recently collected *Buchla Concerts 1975* release on **Finders Keepers** in 40 years
- Live realizations of this FRKWYS collaboration planned through 2016 and 2017

KAITLYN AURELIA SMITH & SUZANNE CIANI Sunergy



FRKWYS 

13

Track Listing

01. A New Day
02. Closed Circuit
03. Retrograde (Bonus Track)

Info

Cat#— FRKWYS12
Artist— Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith & Suzanne Ciani
Title— Sunergy
Genre— Ambient / Modular
Synthesizer Music / Devotional / Solar

Release dates

September 16, 2016

Formats

LP / CD / Digital
Vinyl Is Not Returnable

Box Lot

LP— 23 Inner, 46 Master Carton
CD— 80 Inner, 320 Master Carton

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