

LUSHLIFE

RITUALIZE

ABOUT THIS RECORD

"Peace to Roky Erickson / Peace to Bo Derek / So lost in the television / Walk with the elephants / To die by their relatives / Lushlife holy ghost / Float through the tenements / Back to irrelevance"

From the moment you hear the bristling boom-bap chorus on album-opener "Totally Mutual Feeling," it's apparent that Lushlife's third full-length finds the Philadelphia rapper-producer at his most introspective. Themes of isolation and mortality permeate *Ritualize*, a cinematic hour-long odyssey co-produced by enigmatic production trio, CSLSX (pronounced "Casual Sex") and featuring contributions from Ariel Pink, Killer Mike, Freeway, Marissa Nadler, RJD2, and more. With CSLSX at the boards, an entire universe opens up for Lush, where the pulsating Juno synths of '80s LA night music sit side-by-side with gorgeously propulsive indie-leaning jams, and low-fi soul burners too. The resulting LP is a post-blog-era joint that seems to exhale the whole of the 20th century in a single, fascinating breath.

"After toiling over two self-produced LPs in the last half-decade, I felt compelled to bring on an outside production team for *Ritualize*," Lushlife (born Raj Haldar) explains. "Not only did I want to broaden the musical palette, but I felt like the group production effort would give me a depth of focus on lyrical content and emotion that I hadn't previously been afforded." After a chance encounter with CSLSX, who had been quietly self-releasing low-fi dance gems to remarkable organic blog buzz, the newly-formed team set out on a three-year journey that would eventually yield their new joint album. By the time work began on *Ritualize*, Lush had already been riding a small wave of critical acclaim for his 2012 full-length, *Plateau Vision*, an album that made several year-end lists and was described by the Sunday New York Times as a melding of "captivating rhymes with audacious, gorgeous production." Still, with *Ritualize*, Lushlife and CSLSX seem to have gone one deeper.

From album cut, "The Waking World," which finds Lushlife spitting through sixteens from the vantage of Mark David Chapman lying in wait for John Lennon, to "Incantation," a song that's as much inspired by Allen Ginsberg's Howl as the general, street-level anxieties of urban life, *Ritualize* is nothing short of a step forward. For proof, look no further than "Toynbee Suite," a 10-minute, 4-movement rap epic that explores the strange Toynbee Tile meta-art conspiracy that has captivated Philadelphians for decades. As the centerpiece of the album, "Toynbee Suite" was the subject of a 2013 documentary, and itself represents the combined work of 20+ musicians, including RJD2, Nightlands, Yikes the Zero, and a full chamber orchestra. On the other hand, the CSLSX-produced, "Hong Kong (Lady of Love)," a collaboration with weird music godhead, Ariel Pink, is a sparse yet powerful four-on-the-floor ode to LA, inspired by the film soundtrack work of Giorgio Moroder, Vangelis, and others.



TRACK LIST

01 Total Mutual Feeling	4:00
02 The Waking World ft. I Break Horses	4:16
03 Hong Kong (Lady Of Love) ft. Ariel Pink	4:17
04 Incantation ft. Deniro Farrar	4:42
05 Undress Me In The Temple	1:35
06 Body Double	4:53
07 Toynbee Suite ft. Nightlands, RJD2, Yikes the Zero	9:11
08 Strawberry Mansion ft. Freeway	2:48
09 This Ecstatic Cult ft. Killer Mike	3:28
10 Burt Reynolds (Desert Visions)	6:21
11 Integration Loop ft. Marissa Nadler	2:49
12 Ritualize	5:17

PRESS QUOTES

"...attitude-thick rapping...with gorgeous production..."

- **The New York Times**

"...spectral and melancholy..."

- **Pitchfork**

"...fuses intelligent, gritty hip-hop with forward-thinking indie tropes."

- **KEXP**

"...a masterpiece."

- **Mary Ann Hobbs, BBC**

"Lushlife is an under-the-radar treasure"

- **Stereogum**



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