

KAITLYN AURELIA SMITH

EUCLID

WV130 • LP / CD / MP3
RELEASE DATE: JANUARY 20, 2015

ABOUT THIS RECORD

Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith's formative years were spent communing with nature on Orcas Island in the northwest region of Washington state, a place she describes as "one of the most magical and peaceful places I have ever been." Though she wouldn't begin experimenting with modular synthesis until many years later, her creative work continues to be infused with and inspired by the vitality and serenity of Orcas.

Smith left the island to attend Berklee College of Music, where she studied composition and sound engineering, initially focusing on her voice as her primary instrument, before switching to classical guitar and piano. She employed many of the skills she refined in college in her indie-folk band Ever Isles, but a fateful encounter with a neighbor who lent her a Buchla 100 synthesizer, had a profound effect on her. Mesmerized by the Buchla's potential, she explains "I got so distracted and enamored with the process of making sounds with it that I abandoned the next Ever Isles album." Starting with rhythmic patterns and melodic pulses, she soon began sculpting lush and exciting worlds of sound.

Kaitlyn's solo debut Euclid (primarily written on a Buchla Music Easel synthesizer) was inspired by her love of mbira music, early electronic music pioneers like Laurie Spiegel, Oskar Sala, and Terry Riley, and euclidean geometry. Each of the first six songs on Euclid were initially structured using euclidean geometry, an idea which Smith explored while attending a class at the San Francisco Conservatory. As Smith explains, "We each chose a 3D shape and assigned our own guidelines to the different components that make up the shape. For example each point of the shape represents a different time signature, each line between the points represents a pitch, each shape within the closed lines represents a scale, etc. And then you play the shape." Despite their heady geometric origins, the songs have a playfulness and warmth that makes them inviting and memorable. In addition to the buoyant grooves of Smith's synthesizers, some of the songs feature wordless vocals, which energize the otherworldly songs, while grounding them with Smith's earthly presence.

She slows things down for the second half of the record, which features a collection of twelve short pieces, Labyrinths I-XII. Originally composed as new soundtracks to old silent films she found online, Smith says the tranquil Labyrinth pieces are "intended to feel like one is walking through a holographic labyrinth and encountering different experiences such as hang gliding, viewing microbes under a microscope, ice fishing in Alaska, and watching glaciers collapse." Despite their brevity, most of these songs feel like mini odysseys, effortlessly casting a cinematic hue on the listener's world.

Throughout Euclid Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith consistently delivers sonic puzzles draped in a warm Pacific mist. At times these songs feel so alive – like the musical analog to roots growing deeper and stronger, leaves on branches bending towards the light, or the sun peeking over the horizon, briefly igniting the air with a primordial swirl of warm and cool colors.



TRACK LIST

01	Careen	3:20
02	Wide Awake	2:58
03	Stunts	3:51
04	Sundry	3:29
05	Glide	3:18
06	Escapade	3:47
07	Labyrinth I	1:37
08	Labyrinth II	3:17
09	Labyrinth III	2:16
10	Labyrinth IV	2:27
11	Labyrinth V	1:13
12	Labyrinth VI	2:32
13	Labyrinth VII	2:02
14	Labyrinth VIII	1:31
15	Labyrinth IX	0:52
16	Labyrinth X	1:08
17	Labyrinth XI	1:49
18	Labyrinth XII	0:58

QUOTES

"...adventurous, mesmerizing sonic compositions which cause me to remember my love of music in the early days of electronic sound making machines."

- REGGIE WATTS

"...sheer poetry: charming, playful, evocative, and showing mastery of her medium."

- SUZANNE CIANI

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