



MARSH GAS ian Brighton

The background to Marsh Gas originated from when I took part in a concert at Battersea Town Hall in the spring of 1975. The music, specifically written for children was part composed and part freely improvised. Entitled the Sun Tamer: a Polynesian folk tale, the children participated by playing blown and percussive instruments, all under the guidance of the narrator. As the story unfolded such was their involvement and enjoyment they appeared oblivious to the music being played.

I decided to try something similar and wrote a short story about a gnome like creature called the Plickie and his friends (an enclosure with the original album). They were Zoltaire, quiet and considerate and De-Boop, noisy and bespectacled who played a long horn that wrapped around him. Accompanied by the blind Wizard of a Thousand Eyes who steered them through the dark forest, passing the Old King and his followers, until they reached the Silver River. They separated when the big Apple appeared; the last place of happy jazz. Alone, Plickie journeyed deeper toward the Chapel of Splintered Glass. Here he met the Flashing Wizard who counselled him to ignore others and find his own song. Engulfed in total darkness he sang until he found it, whereupon blinding light streamed in. As his eyes cleared he discovered himself back home inside the marshes. "Wherever you go you cannot escape whoever you are, so just be yourself"

The tracks recorded in Chelmsford Cathedral are of special significance as my grandfather, a leading campanologist in the late 19th century, had rung there 70 years beforehand. One of the hand bell ringers playing with me that day had also rung with my grandfather when he was just a young seaman, home on leave during the 1940's: there I was, following in his footsteps. My love of playing in these atmospheres, albeit simulated, can be heard on 'Imaginations', also on FMR, and on a duet album with guitarist Henry Kaiser entitled 'Together Apart'.

The independent collective label Bead Records kindly released Marsh Gas as Bead 3 in 1977, with financial assistance provided by The Arts Council of Great Britain. Although, as an LP, it sold out many years ago, Bead Records is still an active concern and contactable via its website www.beadrecordssp.com

With recent interest in my music and the non-availability of the original album I have decided to re-issue it as a compact disc. For that many thanks go to:- Kevin Smith of Foundry Studios Portsmouth for media transfer and mastering, Hugh Cutmore for his drawings and Trevor Taylor for layout and production.

Marsh Gas lives onIan Brighton – October 2018

