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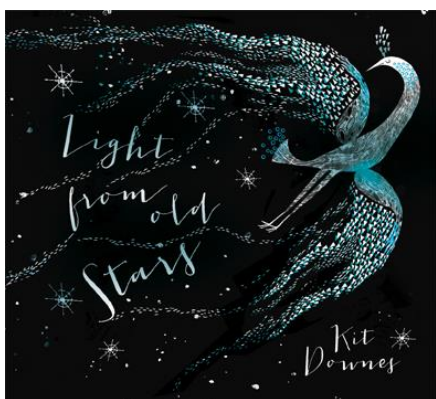
KIT DOWNES

LIGHT FROM OLD STARS

Kit Downes (Piano, Organ on tracks 3, 5 and 8), Calum Gourlay (Bass), James Maddren (Drums), James Allsopp (Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet and Bass Clarinet), Lucy Railton (Cello)

"Downes is an exceptional talent" (Ivan Hewett, The Telegraph)

"One of the finest pianists of his generation" (Time Out)



1. Wander and Colossus 7:13
2. Bleydays 6:27
3. Outlawed 6:57
4. What's The Rumpus 3:44
5. Two Ones 4:49
6. Falling Dancing 0:46
7. Owls 5:15
8. The Mad Wren 6:10
9. Jan Johansson 6:44

All compositions by Kit Downes.

Recorded by Robert Harder and Ben Lamdin. Mixed by Alex Killpartrick.

Artwork by Lesley Barnes. Layout by Yoshiaki Bann

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'The dynamic goings on in the heavens are betrayed by the permanence, the stillness we actually experience when we look up, a steady evenness portrayed in this music, but stars also in their slow way reflect our own cycle of building, growing, peaking, declining, and ending - as heard in *Wander and Colossus* - a transformation both throughout our lives and into new life.' *Daniella Scalice, NASA Astrobiology Institute – 15/9/2012*

Mercury Prize nominated pianist Kit Downes first met astrobiologist Daniella Scalice at the Cheltenham Science Festival. Inspired by ideas of scale, Downes became intrigued by the notion that the stars we see are often dead, and that stargazing is 'a form of time travel without moving'. The celestial scale might seem incomprehensible to us, but there are some routes towards understanding it. These thoughts provided a conceptual framework for the music on *Light From Old Stars*, which explores the realms of the magical and fantastic through very grounded and earthy ideas. These are all complete, live takes without the use of editing.

Light From Old Stars is Downes' first album to be recorded entirely with the quintet line-up, developing and enhancing the approach to ensemble arrangements initiated on *Quiet Tiger*. The compositions collected here are very specific orders and designs that also have chaos built in to them. They also link Downes' disparate musical interests from the early American blues masters through to European classical music via specific references to pianists Paul Bley and Jan Johansson. The raw, urgent quality of blues from guitarists such as Skip James, Blind Willie McTell and Howlin' Wolf is a fundamental inspiration here, not only on the dusty shuffle of *Outlawed* but also in the more veiled blues ideas that can be found throughout the album.



The compositions on *Light From Old Stars* are united through inspirations that are escapist, but which also reflect reality. *What's The Rumpus* gets its title from dialogue in the Coen Brothers film *Miller's Crossing*, whilst *Owls* is inspired by David Lynch's bizarre and surreal drama *Twin Peaks*. The idea for the brief interlude *Falling Dancing* came after watching a ballet performance.

To emphasise these links between various art forms, Downes has been collaborating extensively with artist Lesley Barnes. As well as providing the artwork to accompany the album, Barnes has made a number of video animations to be screened at Downes' performance. Some can be seen now at www.kitdownes.com.

Live Dates:

2nd March – Capstone Theatre, Liverpool

8th March – Komedia, Brighton

13th April – The Hive, Shrewsbury

18th April – Bonnington Theatre, Nottingham

29th April – Cockpit Theatre, London (Jazz on 3)

7th May – Queen's Theatre, Barnstaple

9th May – Colston Hall, Bristol

11th May – Royal Welsh College Jazz Festival, Cardiff

22nd May – The Jazz Bar, Edinburgh

23rd May – Arts Club, Glasgow

7th June – ALBUM LAUNCH – The Forge, Camden Town, London

19th June – Marlborough Jazz Festival

21st September – Kings Place, London

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