



The Telescopes

Radio Sessions (2016 - 2019)

31 May 2024

CD / LP / digital



The Telescopes Radio Sessions collects together the essence of three live session recordings in 3 different countries over a three year period between 2016-2019. This is the third in a series of radio session releases from Tapete Records that have so far included The Monochrome Set and Comet Gain. More session releases are being lined up for the rest of the year and beyond - enjoy the sonics and stay tuned.

Over the years I have read a lot on people's impressions of The Telescopes. Some folk think it's a collective, others imagine it used to be a band and feel nostalgia towards what they consider to be the original line-up (even though many had come before, during and since) and some people refer to it as currently a solo career. In a way this is all true and none of it is.

When faced with these kind of questions, along with questions about the style of music that The Telescopes make I often say The Telescopes house has many rooms, which explains things perfectly for me but for people on the outside looking in it only serves to increase their confusion. For me, confusion isn't such a bad thing. Everything is born into confusion, the sense we try and make of that chaos is interesting and excites me. The universe often disorientsates, it sends me a jumble of thoughts and impressions coupled with a feeling of something I need to express... if I could only decipher the encryption. This is how The Telescopes music comes to be and it is also how The Telescopes came to me.

I regard The Telescopes as an entity of it's own that introduced itself in my darkest hour and I was chosen as its vessel. From the second it arrived I was obsessed to the point where there was nothing else. A bit like having an imaginary friend. As the obsession grew it began to infect others, everybody loved my imaginary friend and wanted a piece of it. As its success grew however, so did the corruption, until one day the entity fell silent.

The silence lasted for years, I tried everything to reconnect but it was having none of it. I had been a bad caretaker, I had let the house become infested and I had lost my way. This epiphany served to remind me of simpler times when anything felt possible with this entity by my side. It had trusted me with something so simplistically profound and I had let it down. The realisation of this was a eureka moment. I am not The Telescopes, I never was and never will be, I am the caretaker, the lighthouse keeper and if a job is worth doing it is worth doing well.

With this dawning, I felt a crack open up in the cosmic egg and a familiar confusion in my head. The entity had returned. It was time to start untangling its tangled threads once more, to make sense of what it was saying, this time without corruption.

It's all about listening. I listen to what my cosmic friend sends me and channel this expression into what you hear through your speakers. It may take one person to achieve this, it may take more. There is no set line up or instrumentation that can hold The Telescopes. Whatever it takes to hit the zone, whatever is available, absolute focus is imperative. Sometimes it takes sabotage to keep that line of vision intact, there is no room for preconceptions or complacency in making the music. The Telescopes music is the now incarnate and a state of total being is necessary to achieve.

From the outside looking in... again, it's all about listening. What comes through your speakers is the only thing that matters. The music either reaches you or it doesn't. Everything else may seem interesting or confusing but ultimately it is corruption.

So if you've bought the record, read the sleeve notes and bought a ticket to see a live show, don't be surprised if the line-up is or isn't the same as the recording. The only thing that is for sure is that The Telescopes as an entity is speaking to you in its own voice in every scenario.

Of course the difference between albums and live shows is that you can play the record over and over again to the point where you know every line and every note that was played. Whereas with live events you are left with an impression that can only be replayed in your mind. It can be frustrating at times. When you are touring with a great line-up and feel like something exciting is happening, you want everyone to hear it, not just the people at the shows but the people that couldn't make it on the night as well. There is no guarantee that there will be the same line-up at a live show as there is on the album. This is why live sessions are important, they document a side of things that is often fleeting.

Here we have three sessions, all different people transmitting The Telescopes sound on each. Some are regulars, some dip in and out and some were just passing through. In each case The Telescopes chose them as their vessel and as the lighthouse keeper I did everything I could to help them on that journey while trying to be a good caretaker to the house of many rooms.

The Telescopes have been invited in for many sessions over the years, the first two were for John Peel on BBC Radio 1. We also recorded a session for Marc Riley and Mark Radcliffe before their celebrity when they had a show on BBC Radio Manchester. We could have compiled this album from those sessions, it was certainly considered but Tapete and myself believe this selection gives an exciting glimpse into that fleeting side of The Telescopes in a constant state of flux that is left mostly to myth and imagination.

For those who listen to the records but have never had the chance to take in the live experience, welcome to the other side. For those that follow us live, here's a little reminder and a keepsake.

Infinite suns.

Stephen Lawrie
February 2024.

Tracklisting

- A1.** Handful Of Ashes (Radio Sessions)
- A2.** The Perfect Needle (Radio Sessions)
- A3.** Violence (Radio Sessions)

- B1.** Strange Waves (Radio Sessions)
- B2.** We See Magic And We Are Neutral, Unnecessary (Radio Sessions)
- B3.** You Can't Reach What You Hunger (Radio Sessions)
- B4.** Something In My Brain (Radio Sessions)



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