[CD]  [LP] 

CUNEIFORM RECORDS
WWW.CUNEIFORMRECORDS.COM

Bio information: **SCHNELLERTOLLERMEIER**
Title: ***SHADOW WEB*** (Cuneiform Rune 562)
Format: CD / VINYL / DIGITAL
www.cuneiformrecords.com
FILE UNDER: **EXPERIMENTAL-AVANT-PSYCH-MINIMAL / POST-JAZZ / IMPROV**

After years of extensive touring,
Schnellertollermeier return with a new double LP:
"Shadow Web" marks the opening of a new
chapter in the band's 20-year history.
Following the raw directness of their last releases,
this ambiguity and permeability comes as
a surprise: the new album intensifies the
atmosphere from the very first sound —
it radiates clarity in every fibre, and yet
leaves so much open. On "Shadow Web,"
the present circulates, expanding in waves.

Optimism through Stillness and Immersion

Where Schnellertollermeier have previously pushed walls of sound from A to B with great decisiveness, dynamism and force, on the new album they bring out entirely different aspects of clarity and control: having so far moved primarily within a linear sense of time with their energetic, sharply structured, at times brutal minimalism, with "Shadow Web" they turn towards a non-linear understanding of time. The new music is marked by softness and inner calm; it relies on the power of slowness and has the courage to work inward rather than forward — the courage, too, to trust in the unspectacular and the uncertain. After all, a garden grows even when you don't pull at the seedlings.

With this, Schnellertollermeier set a pulsating sound field of radiant warmth and improvisational playfulness against the brutality, coldness and strained certainty of our current state of the world. This inward-resting trust has the potential to activate a considered optimism in listeners.

As on previous albums, there are only minimal overdubs — most of the music was recorded live and simultaneously, which highlights one of the band's greatest strengths: the winding and unwinding of monumentally long arcs. The music continuously spirals its way into the depths — paradoxically, this generates a recurring thermal, upward energy across the broad arc of the four long-form tracks.

Shadow Web, or What Implicitly Holds Things Together

What does the title of the almost 22-minute opening track tell us? An "epoxide" is a molecule with a small ring made of two carbon atoms and one oxygen atom, which, owing to its high ring strain, is highly reactive. The name seems to carry the programme of the entire album within it. "Epoxide" opens with a static organ surface,

behind which the guitar can only be sensed, before the trio breaks in like a wave. Bass and drums weave a fine-grained fabric of rhythmic circles, at once driving forward and interlocking. The guitar spreads out arpeggiated chords, lets them fade, withdraws, leaves space and resurfaces. Improvisation and immersion play a central role on this album. The opening track leaves plenty of room for imagination, is as organic as it is direct, and yet remarkably restrained. The focus wanders steadily from one musical element or instrument to the next — floating and grounded at the same time. After six and a half minutes, a recurring guitar motif appears for the first time, a harmonic chord progression that tenderly generates warmth and emotionally disarms. This unassuming approach runs through the entire piece.

On the second track, “Shadow Web,” the tempo picks up; the driving drumming combines the playful freedom of jazz with echoes of contemporary Brazilian baile funk, performed by a drum machine. Although Schnellertollermeier, with their hyper-precise instrumental playing and virtuosic manipulation of sound, have often sounded like electronic music before, the effective integration of a drum machine is a new step. Here too: more freedom and punch thanks to a structure that is clear yet still open. Guitar and bass complement each other, moving both apart and towards one another, until the track eventually closes with a six-minute finale.

After forty rhythmically dense minutes, the third track, “Shelter,” brings a point of stillness: aside from the steady, cool pulse of the drum machine in the background, there are no longer any composed elements here. Although the instruments move so autonomously, they merge into textures, complement one another in wondrous ways and set gentle accents — a tentative search for comfort.

The album closes with “Through the Glass Walls”: a densely and carefully interlaced rhythmic structure that moves forward with a lightness already felt on earlier albums, but here realised with a much more open creative will.

A Well-Toured Clockwork

With their genre-defying body of work and their highly precise, transcendental live shows, the Swiss trio has earned a firm place on international festival stages: from the FIMAV festival for current music in Victoriaville, via the famous avant-garde club SuperDeluxe in Tokyo, to the Haldern Pop Festival in Germany, from Europe to South America, in China, Japan, Canada, the USA and India — always in search of the greatest possible intensity.

In 2026, too, the three musicians are not concerned with managing their egos, optimising the marketability of their output, or the general comfort of their listeners, but with abolishing hierarchies: the traditional power relations between drums, bass and guitar are consistently dissolved in Schnellertollermeier’s music. What remains constant is the commitment to submit themselves to a shared organism, within whose inner life the silhouettes of the individual sonic identities dissolve.

The new album “Shadow Web” is remarkably restrained for this band, multilayered and touching, and shows three musicians who, over 20 years, have developed a blind understanding and trust in one another — so much so that Julian Cowley of the British music magazine The Wire suspected telepathic magic behind the three Swiss musicians’ clairvoyant interplay.

The new album proclaims no answers; it allows for ambiguity and creates time for immersion. It is an album for everyone who wants time to expand, and for everyone who does not distinguish between sound, physicality and energy. And it is an album for everyone who sometimes suspects that their inner self sounds like the outermost reaches of the world.