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 \ / | | / \ | \ \ / / | | | / | | \ / Number 225
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PETRA KLUSMEYER - PRE_NEXT_POP

BRIAN LAVELLE - FAULT/R

HEM - SEE INLAY CARD FOR DETAILS

(All CD-R's by Microwave Recordings)

Having introduced these names on the compilation 'A Manual', Microwave now presents full length releases of the above mentioned artists. Petra Klusmeyer's work could be described as interrupted drone ambient, the focus of the music not being so much on the rhythm, but more on the sound quality of the pieces. The interruptions are part of a total soundscape. The tracks are relatively short and one slides from one to the other. In general the pieces are quite gentle, with a sudden break here and there. It seems to me that this is as much microwave as it is electronic music or even ambient. In this way Klusmeyer escapes categorization and sets a style of her own. A good record, that makes me curious how Klusmeyer will develop her music in the future.

Brian Lavelle's record also defies categorization pretty much. Loops and bleeps seem to predict your average microwave record, but that is soon enough denied by all the weird sounds used. At some times the tracks even seem to become poppy in there structure. But they never get really predictable (although track four could have been a little shorter). I was particularly amazed by the way Lavelle manages to create sounds that I have never heard before. Excellent sampling and filtering generate a sound world of its own. Track six, for example, seems to consist of a stretched sample, but cut up and filtered in such a way that something totally new emerges. Very very nice indeed.

The last one in this review only adds to the descriptions above, but is certainly the most funky of the lot. It barely escapes the dance floor (or does it?). Again there is an array of sounds that seem to come from someones distorted brain (not Brian), used in such a way that the word poppy springs to mind again. But that is only superficial, I'm happy to say. Hem also succeed in escaping a too narrow definition. They produce some highly catchy tracks here, without falling into the trap of predictability. The tracks have a feeling of nervous relaxation to them, which is a paradox of course. But that is also exactly what makes them strong. Another good one here. With three releases at once and all of them good, Microwave is establishing itself as one of those small labels that are able to discover and introduce new and interesting music without too much ado.

(MR)

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