

Various - 10 Years of Communication compiled by DJ Anneli (Phantasm)

Contributed by damion psyreviews

Do we need chicks on album covers? We do when the music says nothing

Psyreviews' Gash-Up(TM) of the above is here.

The decline of Phantasm records over the years has been more pronounced than that of TipWorld, and even BNE, however most of us don't spend a great deal of time thinking about it. Phantasm was always one of those "also-ran" labels from yesteryear. This was before they released Eskimo. Their musical direction and quality control have slid considerably, culminating in dross moments like Sirius Isness, and an album last year I heard at a mate's house as an example of "hey this is so shit, you'll love it."

I did.

So what have we got here then. A bird on the cover. Yes, a bird on the cover. This is just the sort of thing that used to infuriate me, but thanks to those lovely meds (plus getting exercise, eating less fried food, and laying off the crack) this is something that I can now stoically accept as "the way things are."

Yes. Naturally, if it's an album and it's by a chick, you have to put that chick's photo on the front. Otherwise, how do we know it's by a chick, right? What a pity they don't do this for albums compiled by blokes. Zep Tepi not featuring a grinning Mick Chaos on the front cover is perhaps the greatest single tragedy in the history of this wonderful scene.

Like many photos of chicks, this cover demands closer inspection. Unlike many photos of chicks, this is because she seems to have a hand growing from her left breast.

Let's take a closer look (thanks incidentally to Psyshop for allowing me to hotlink their images for the last seven years.)

So, alright then. Floating headphones I can handle. This suggests some kind of sonic magic, inferring the way in which Anneli thinks of DJing. That's fine.

The decks being replaced by what look like tinned food without the labels, I can again sort of understand. It's a statement that nobody makes any money from psytrance, so they all have to eat dog food.

The key issue, however, is just how well Anneli seems to have done in this DJ world with what looks to be like some sort of post-Chernobly thalidamide exposure.

It's alarming to think of how anyone can DJ without a right elbow. And the condition where one's skin changes colour halfway up your arm, a condition whose name I forget, is another unfortunate affliction with which she has coped admirably.

Most alarming of all is her left arm. That's the one on the right of the picture, protruding towards us. The one without any upper arm, shoulder, or elbow. The arm that starts at breast and progresses by way of wrist to outstretched hand. The one with the hand that's almost the same size as her head.

This cover is, of course, a disgrace. The quality of photoshoppery isn't really the issue, I know; it's the fact that this scene is all too quick to ditch its openness, unity and general switched-on good vibeage when it comes to selling records. Okay, it's compiled by a woman. Why should this become the album's selling point? Why not the music itself? Why lower the already low Lowest Fullon Denominator (TM) any more than is absolutely necessary?

It's sad that we're at this point, but it's not entirely surprising. Having a giggle at the cover might urge you not to buy this release, and by not buying this release you're making a stand against the "avatarisation" of music in this way. Which is great, because already 99% of the population are already on-side and won't buy this album!

Musically I found this eminently disposable, skipping through the tracks just as I always seem to do with stuff that arrives from Electro Public.

Laughable, really.