

DONNACHA COSTELLO

Before We Say Goodbye

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There are few artists these days who consistently succeed to focus their passions, talents and instincts into deliciously individual, melancholic, beautiful and timeless recordings. Irish born Donnacha Costello is amongst the highest ranks of such artists.

Donnacha's plethora of productions, be it on his own much lauded Minimise label (his famous 'Colourseries' collection setting the standard over a huge body of work) or his new 'Look Long' platform, have proved again and again that electronic music need not be cold of emotion or lack deeper meaning. Indeed, his sweetly spun melodic stories, or hypnotic synthesiser refrains can capture the heart as well as the body.

So, Poker Flat is proud to announce Donnacha Costello's new full length album. 'Before We Say Goodbye' is an exquisite work to say the least. Focusing on a rich blueprint, with echoes of Chicago House, Detroit Techno and UK Ambient Techno flowing through its futuristic core, Donnacha explores further his love for deep, hypnotising grooves, rich synth themes and emotive harmonies.

The opening bars of introductory track 'Leaving Berlin' welcome the listener into Donnacha's sprawling musical landscape. Intertwining layers of lovingly expressed synth themes build and recede in an honest and subtle game of balance. Setting the tone for the album then, similar themes are mirrored later on and gracefully resurrected in new lights.

Colour in sound, space and clarity are at the centre of the wonderful production found in every track. Donnacha used only a strict handful of vintage equipment; in fact aside from the drums which were processed using Native Instruments' Maschine, all the musical elements were created using only the Roland SH-101, Sequential Circuits Prophet 5 Rev2 without Midi and the New England Digital Synclavier II. Those rare and mesmerising tones and textures, respectfully and accurately conveyed, form the heart-melting melodies of tracks like 'It's What We Do' or 'The Tug' - tunes clearly inspired by difficult personal experiences that Donnacha chose to translate into glorious moments of musicality. These versatile instruments work in unison to provide lush and dense soundscapes, tense sci-fi dramatics or pulsing acidic workouts like 'Stretching Time'.



Being a personal album, there are numerous references to the club sound that Costello is of course well known for. From the rousing Post-Deephouse of 'A Warm Embrace', to the tougher technoid jams of 'No-one Is Watching' or 'Roll It Out', a natural ear for dancefloor mechanics is at play, yet the emotional element never strays far.

Clocking in at just under an hour, it's a satisfying journey, but not an exhausting one. Donnacha was keen to tell a story that can be listened to in one session, while the listener is on the move perhaps or in other transitory states ... allowing full connection with the music and reflection upon some of the themes laid out within. Full of deep personal messages; music undoubtedly from the heart, it's something that will surely take up a special place in the life of the listener.

Just as the nine tracks form a whole, the album could offer a narrative to everyday life, to punctuate the day, or add meaning and memory to times past. This is not only a masterfully produced longplayer, but a work of emotional communication through music.

As the final bars of concluding track 'Last Train Home' sink into the sub-conscious, the listener is left with the feeling that something very important, worthwhile and life-enriching has just passed through their head-space. From Donnacha Costello's heart and mind to yours, 'Before We Say Goodbye'.

01. Leaving Berlin
02. A Warm Embrace
03. It's What We Do
04. No-one Is Watching
05. Roll It Out
06. With Me Still
07. Stretching Time
08. The Tug
09. The Last Train Home



DONNACHA COSTELLO BEFORE WE SAY GOODBYE

Track By Track

01. Leaving Berlin

A warm and deeply emotional introduction to the album, singing strings and a stand-out bassline drive this memorable piece through to its finale. Almost a microcosm of the album itself, there's drama, tension and resolution to be found.

02. A Warm Embrace

A respectful nod to Chicago and New York House lovingly swings full circle as complex and timeless dubbed phrases swim under a staccato synth array. Heavy bass pressure and reduced percussion push on through the night...

03. It's What We Do

Clearly a personal message that speaks to us all, Donnacha's sweet melodies merge together in a blissful journey of self discovery and celebration.

04. No-one Is Watching

Tense, deep swung Detroitian synth excursions lead this taught jam through its many intricate phases. Tripping, swinging and jacking this free-form Techno cut opens up into a jazz chorded, blossoming ride.

05. Roll It Out

Perhaps the heaviest track on the album, the strong, rolling drums of the opening bars lead the listener head first into another jacking - Modern Acid adventure. Skipping and jumping in excited bursts of light and colour, you'll be transported to other worlds and back.

06. With Me Still

The first beat-less track to be found on the long-player, this touching and honest synth-scape just goes on to confirm Donnacha's natural ear for melodies; connecting with one's emotions and their surroundings in a forward-looking world that never forgets the past.

07. Stretching Time

Rousing bass lines, static dubbed electricity, sublime chords and acidic refrains all melt together in this final beat driven synth exploration into the unknown.

08. The Tug

Tugging at the heart-strings in classic Costello style, this beautifully constructed micro-symphony revolves around the listener, capturing them in its gentle brilliance, soothing and reconciling.

09. The Last Train Home

A final ode to the many themes put across throughout the Album, we find ourselves resolved and content, free to enjoy this final chapter in all its understated and reduced finities ... hanging onto every last bar as we approach our imminent arrival.

