

THE BRUTAL WAVE

FRANK (JUST FRANK)



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(Wierd Records)

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*press materials can be found at
fourpawsmedia.com/frankjustfrank

Track List:

1. Beneath
2. Mr. Itagaki
3. Die in Bed
4. Crisis
5. Jalousie
6. Le Son du Trottoir
7. Séraphine
8. Coeur Hanté
9. The Closet Song

CD only bonus songs:

10. Ride of a Lifetime
11. Collapse



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Wierd Records proudly presents the debut album from Frank(just Frank) from Paris, France entitled 'The Brutal Wave'. 'The Brutal Wave' draws from many rich traditions of guitar-driven wave, minimal synth, and new indie music from Brooklyn respectively - layering lush washes of atmospheric anglophilic guitars that invoke early REM, Smiths, or the Cocteau Twins above a minimal synth and drum machine fueled backdrop with the caustic intensity of A Place to Bury Strangers, the wavy sounds of Crystal Stilts or The Pains of Being Pure at Heart, and the sweeping melancholia of The Depreciation Guild. Equally of disparate origins are the band members themselves: Chris was born in New Jersey and grew up with half-Indian Kirti in Nice in the South of France, although both were schooled in London. Despite such varied influences and backgrounds, Frank Just Frank is based in France, and indeed proudly embrace and present a newly modernized version of the highly-overlooked tradition of early 80's moody French pop known at the time as the Cold Wave, or 'La Vague Froide'.

From the late 1970's through the late 1980's, the cold wave scene in Germany, Holland, Italy, Belgium, and predominately France was carried forth to infamous obscurity by the esoteric yet monolithic efforts of bands such as Asylum Party, Little Nemo, and Marquis de Sade with shiver-inducing swathes of guitars, restrained and mournful, bitingly insistent vocals, and warmly melodic washes of synthesizers that added a dramatic, orchestral richness to the mix. Just as the later French cold wave acts were not shy about where they got their metallic kicks - often merging the feverishly aggressive sounds of American and UK metal and new wave in the later part of the 80s in particular - Chris and Kirti's heavier interests have also influenced their sound. What began as a youthful foray into black and death metal has matured into a kinship with the hybridized new black metal scene (christened the 'Black Wave') now emerging in France in 2010 that is also ingesting the influences of the cold wave groups. Initially, the duo appropriated the term 'brutal' for their own devices, using it to describe something extremely positive, private and inspiring. This has since morphed into a genre of its own as Chris and Kirti often describe their music, infusing the lauded past with a multi-valenced futurism that drives the up front urgency of this 'brutal wave.' It is fitting, then, that Frank(just Frank)'s album be titled so biographically personal as such, alluding to the duo's manipulation of opposites and complementary binaries, and through which they inject personal narratives as the icy cold waves crash onto American and British shores...

Personal politics are actually the most mined topic on the record, and where inner battlefields are laid bare and vulnerable. These issues are dealt with in both English and French, the songs effortlessly switching languages without missing a beat, which to the English-speaking listener suddenly shifts cerebral focus away from following the lyrical narratives and into rather suddenly hearing the French voice as more of an additional instrument that is so poetically appropriate in conveying the emotion of melancholy indeed, unfolding in the narratives themselves. These include love addiction ('Crisis'), childhood nostalgia ('Die In Bed'), street side lust ('Le Son du Trottoir'), and the internal torture of jealousy ('Jalousie'). As for the latter two, little is lost in translation that isn't made up for musically, as 'Le Son du Trottoir' has a fast, infectious, seductive core for the dancefloor and 'Jalousie' a pathos-driven shimmering guitar-bassline dynamics that stings with its deep sonic scrapes.

From the first glance, FJF twist and challenge conceptions of sound, substance, and vision on 'The Brutal Wave'. Printed in a sickly sweet hue of electric pink on a coldly neutral gray, the album cover depicts a French Right wing sympathizer/seducer having her head shaved by a Leftist as punishment for her politics and thus 'personal imperfections'. This tension between Right and Left, dark and light, and private versus public consistently replays itself throughout the record, both in the lyrical content and the musical dynamics at work. FJF employ the trope to recount a true story concerning a Japanese professor of both Chris and Kirti's wrongly accused of racism by an African student in 'Mr. Itagaki,' which stirs a discussion both of WWII fascism and the obliterating powers of Western liberalism that brought the Japanese to their knees with Hiroshima's destruction. This ideological contrast is couched in bouncing beats and jangly guitars that ring with brightness and urgency. FJF do not simplify the complex tensions they discuss, but seek to illuminate them and use these battling forces at work in each track as an energized, intimately produced bedroom electronic, humanistic spirit of today!

Linguistically, ideologically, and aesthetically this young band is constructed in true contemporary style, where having a bricolage of influence is not anathema to espousing a singular, earnest vision, maturely digesting many disparate traditions which truly congeal into a new idiosyncratic sound that is very much their own. This record is made with simultaneous confrontation and restraint, and laced with lyrical shadow, powerful dramatic emotion, and homemade immediacy and excitement! It is this powerful, careful interplay between extremes that Frank(just Frank) harnesses to carve out 'The Brutal Wave'.