



Fujiya & Miyagi *Artificial Sweeteners*

“A perfect union of man and machine” MOJO

Few have offered such a bittersweet taste of pop through their career as Fujiya & Miyagi; underneath the sticky wrappers that have packaged their sugary synth lines and rich hooks since the turn of the Millennium, there's always been a grittier aftertaste - be it manifest through their love of pounding 70's krautrock, or in the seen-it-all weariness of their lyrics.

On *Artificial Sweeteners*, the Brighton-based trio's fifth album, that conflict of light and dark has well and truly been conquered. Steve Lewis, Matt Hainsby and David Best pour forth with a new slew of irresistible saccharine; get ready to rot your teeth on *Artificial Sweeteners*.

“Artificial Sweeteners is about what's being expressed more in hope rather than in fact,” explains Best. *“Believing things will get better allows us to get through what life throws at us. The music aims to be life affirming and positive, offering an escape route from reality. I think taking enjoyment from the pleasurable aspects of life that counteract all the stress and anxieties is the best way to live.”*

That's thematically; musically it's a hot and heady dance-floor record, each spin giving off the musk and the potential of a congregational euphoria. Reaching back to the influences that got them into dance music in the first place; beach parties and warehouse raves in their native Brighton, early Warp Records and Carl Craig – the group wrote at an inspired clip, revelling in digging out their old samplers and synths and sizing them up against the digital technology they continue to explore the limits of.

Whereas in the past Fujiya & Miyagi haven't been afraid of risking division with their work, here they aim to unite. Coming off the more live band-orientated fourth LP, *Ventriloquizing*, Best had realised *“One of the things we are good at is making people dance, and, really, there's no greater reason to make music than the ability to have a physical reaction on someone.”* So it was that they returned to their roots, with an album that's their most overtly electronic since way back to their mighty second album, 2006's *Transparent Things*, or even debut *Electro Karaoke In The Negative Style*.

Yet make no mistake, this is no regression; the bubbling, skittering instrumentals 'Rayleigh Scattering' and 'Tetrahydrofolic Acid' have a crispness and clarity like no Fujiya & Miyagi's funk-filled electronic jam before; 'Little Stabs At Happiness' sounds like a treasured early DFA 10", only dusted off and injected with a candy-coated serum.. Other tracks like 'Daggers' and opening disco jam 'Flaws' swagger with a sense of measured cool, befitting in their confident feel an entity who've now been at the top of their game for more than a decade. *“We feel like we've got a record that goes straight for the jugular,”* enthuses Best.

Best's use of words for sound-quality over meaning and repetition of phrase to deepen meaning elsewhere is inspired by Serge Gainsbourg and Iggy Pop. *“Both knew how to give the seemingly trivial or shallow depth,”* he explains, *“by cutting away the flab you can make what you produce less self-indulgent.”* That's something you couldn't have ever accused Fujiya & Miyagi of across a 14-year career; but even for them, where *Artificial Sweeteners* may be deliriously high, coming up on a sugar rush, it also works as perhaps their leanest, most fat-free record of all-killer no-filler yet. Put another sweet in your mouth, you can worry about your teeth in the morning.

For more information, contact: Ever Kipp / Tiny Human - ever@tinymhuman.com