

Dirtwire — Showdown (2017)

Written by bluesever
Sunday, 11 June 2017 14:13 -

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1. *Struttin* 02:46 2. *The Whip* 04:21 3. *Viento (feat. Maria Del Pilar)* 03:36 4. *Shishkabob* 04:36 5. *GoGo* 03:42 6. *Russadir* 03:58 7. *Bridge of Suns* 03:24 8. *Lost Highway* 05:17 9. *Vibez* 05:10 10. *Yes* 02:47 11. *Mueve* 05:43 12. *Sunshine* 02:18

Evan Fraser - vocals, kamale ngoni, harmonica, lap steel guitar, jaw harp, megaphone, synth, percussion, kazoos, whistling, flute, accordion, mellotron, clavinet, glockenspiel, water and rain samples, theramin. David Satori - slide banjo, bowed banjo, fiddle, theramin, drums, percussion, melodica, lap steel, vocals Mark Reveley - resonator guitar, electric banjo, acoustic guitar, whamola bass, percussion, synth, samples, vocals, bass programming, lap steel, vocals Maria Del Pilar - vocals on *Viento* Emma Hellsten - vocals on *Vibez*

Oakland trio Dirtwire blends myriad styles, from western soundtracks to electronic music to dirty blues, on its latest album, *Showdown*. With members hailing from acts like Beats Antique and Jed and Lucia, the experimental, genre-defying nature of music seems unavoidable, resulting in songs that make room for tribal chanting, wind and stringed instruments, and electronic elements, creating a sound that's eclectic, but never jarringly or obnoxiously so. --- Chris Steffen, allmusic.com

Beats Antique's Dave Satori is back with a new wave of nu-gypsy with his project Dirtwire; comprised of himself, Evan Fraser of Dogon Lights, and Mark Revely of Jed and Lucia. Their latest album is titled *Showdown*, and with it they will be hosting a string of tour dates to accompany the release, which you can expect to see on a number of major festival lineups. Though reminiscent of the gypsy-esque style of Beats Antique, Dirtwire is a subtle departure from that sound, exploring a more folk and rock n' roll oriented approach. Each of the three artists hail from the west coast, and the sound they bring is one that is, I believe, deeply

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representative of the consciousness of the region in a variety of ways, each one of them a particular expression of the all-encompassing evolution of the culture it seeks to bring to life; a sound that they themselves have dubbed 'global acoustic electro'.

It's no secret that when bands like the Rolling Stones and Led-Zeppelin became famous they were attempting to combine the current rock n' roll format with the blues sound of the early 20th century. Showdown is also an album with a sound reminiscent of that golden era of rock. They themselves have described their sound as blues bass. Yet aside from that blues core there is an undeniable dance sound present in their music.

This fact is reflected in the opening title track Struttin, which being one of the few songs on the album to feature vocals, has a classic rock n roll texture to it, with a slight folk presence, blues swagger, and a subtle electronic accent. The track is important because it showcases the depth of their sound. The next track, fittingly titled The Whip, featuring sound clips and whistles from the old, wild west, and is an instrumental track playing off that consciousness. This is the sort of track that maintains the western identity of the band, as they proceed into the next song titled Viento, featuring Maria Del Pilar, that is performed in Spanish, and maintains a Spanish accent throughout the track. GoGo is a return to the horn and strings fusion that is a core feature in each of these musicians sound bringing together elements of symphony, jazz, blues, and rock n roll into a three and a half minute piece. Russadir and Bridge of Suns take a 180 from the previous tracks, exploring more of their far eastern roots. Russadir is melodic and atmospheric, while Bridge of Suns takes a more mid tempo approach. Lost Highway contains all the elements of a rock n roll ballad, while the subtle sense of a house beat moves throughout most of the track. Halfway through, it breaks into a violin solo that is carried out for the remainder of the track.

In a world in which there is so much music that gets constantly reproduced on a daily basis, it's refreshing to get to review artists who consciously explore the entire soundscape of musical expression. The number of stylistic elements combined in every track are of such that they stand to only hit or miss, yet every tracks clicks masterfully and showcases the artistic depth of the musicians. As I listen to this album the phrase 'bohemian rhapsody' continuously pops into my head. Not that this album is reflective of the Queen song in anyway, but that it seems to encapsulate the freedom embodying, Bohemian spirit. It's concrescent. It's sexual. It's just good fucking music. --- Buckley Rue, composeyourselfmagazine.com

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