



See Blue Audio – Press Release

'hycean'

Rhombus Index

See Blue Audio SBA #055

- 1. Elytron**
- 2. Giiflora**
- 3. Digital Anemone**
- 4. Polyeme**
- 5. Tine**
- 6. Flotsam**
- 7. Coastal Curve**

Release date: 20 September 2024

See Blue Audio: ambient / electronic / beatless / cinematic / downtempo / eclectic / introspective... Shade rather than light...

Following 'Mutual Expression', his recent collaborative project with f5point6, Rhombus Index returns with a solo album, 'hycean'. This will be his fourth release on See Blue Audio and represents a further step in the artist's musical evolution; this is a world where the interplay between the organic and the digital takes centre stage, and it has a special resonance in these days of artificial intelligence and machine learning. 'hycean' is the fifty-fifth release on See Blue Audio and, reflecting their symbiotic relationship, a new solo album from f5point6, 'A Random Sequence of Events', will also be released on the same day. An art booklet of images generated during the creation of 'hycean' is included with the album.

As an electronic artist from West Yorkshire, Rhombus Index inhabits a geographical and historical space where modern, industrial society and the power of nature collide. It's only logical, therefore, that these contradictory forces come out in his music. 'hycean' is an exploration of sounds that evoke images of organically grown digital creatures and objects. The typically enigmatic track titles, artwork and video for 'Digital Anemone' serve as a guide for the listener: imagine a future evolution of organic beings merging with digital inorganic entities to form a new kind of life.

The production tools used on 'hycean' include generative sequencers, field recordings, wavetable synthesis and rompler synthesisers, while the closing track, 'Coastal Curve', was developed using sonification of coastal path measurement data. These techniques and references to areas like video game technology are a constant thread in the work of Rhombus Index, and the natural and digital worlds are ever crashing into each other in a kind of dance.

Over the seven tracks of 'hycean', the pastoral electronic sound of Rhombus Index is in full effect. The embrace of washes of warm synth chords, beats fall like smatterings of spring rain, and that playful elegance abundantly found in nature. Faster tempos on tracks like 'Flotsam' add another dimension, while remaining essentially ambient. The artist has always drawn influences from the dancefloor and rave culture, and 'Digital Anemone' captures the kind of Balearic aura that is the essence of dance music. The beatless aesthetic of See Blue Audio is also represented on 'Elytron' and 'Polyeme'.

'Digital Anemone' was created in reverse with the video elements made first and then the music written to fit the video. The sounds of digital anemone creatures are heard in the opening minute as high pitch synth warbles. Once the track was completed, it was then fed back into the video to make it audio reactive.

The accompanying eight-page, full colour booklet contains conceptual images that were created using a generative process applied during developing the image for the cover artwork. These images could be seen as depicting the new digital flora and fauna that has evolved alongside the music. The booklet also contains fragments of data, but what these data sets mean and how they relate to the images is something for the listener to figure out should they wish. This art booklet is presented as a downloadable PDF and only available to purchasers of the full album through Bandcamp.

A gentle harmony runs throughout 'hycean', but this harmony is not without contrast and conflict. The album is a personal reflection on the fusing of organic and digital realities, and the journey of discovery that the introduction of generative artificial intelligence has brought into our lives. We have little idea how it will end. With its lightness of touch and moments of rare beauty, 'hycean' thoroughly deserves to be enjoyed and recognised as a richly insightful piece of work.

'hycean' is also available in a limited edition compact disc version.