



See Blue Audio – Press Release

'Displacement Activity Vol. 3'

Steve Hadfield

See Blue Audio SBA #012

- 1. Reflected**
- 2. Blossom Is a Vector**
- 3. Ever Onward**
- 4. Liminal Night Feeds**
- 5. Alone, Dark**

Release date: 6 November 2020

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

Back in January 2020, Steve Hadfield released the first instalment of 'Displacement Activity', which was also his second release on See Blue Audio, when the COVID-19 pandemic was just an approaching blip on the radar. Its release also coincided with the delights and challenges of becoming a parent for the first time. Volume two followed in May as we were in the midst of a strange new world, and Steve's music had taken on a more reflective, shadowy tone as the world grappled with confinement, and his parenting took on a higher level of intensity than perhaps originally anticipated, while all around uncertainty raged.

Ten months on and as one of the most remarkable years of modern times draws to a close, we have 'Displacement Activity Vol. 3', the twelfth release on See Blue Audio, and five tracks in Steve's trademark fusion of ambient/modern classical and glitchy electronics. The first two volumes of 'Displacement Activity' were written prior to coronavirus as Steve was beginning to see the early signs of conflict and dark political forces, and then think about how these could be navigated through parenthood. Those warnings are turning into reality alongside the pandemic. This gives the music its shadowy feel, and it seems particularly apt that these latest tracks are being released as we approach a time when some kind of 'new normality' sits uneasily beside the fresh storm clouds that may be gathering, virus-related, social and political.

There are a range of different moods on 'Displacement Activity Vol. 3', and it was forged during a time when the pandemic inevitably casts its shadow. The opening track, 'Reflected', is a reworking of 'Reflections' from 'Displacement Activity Vol. 1', and more ghostly, beatless atmospherics, but with the same lightness of touch and sense of adventure (the original was composed before the birth of his daughter, while the new version reflects the joy she has brought).

The more uptempo, percussive 'Blossom Is a Vector', with its layers of warped piano and strings, and 'Ever Onward', which takes the mood down a notch with melancholy piano notes and electronic distortion, both retain this sense of warmth and promise. The former was composed after the family's first walk in the local park following the relaxation of lockdown, where a nine-month-old could finally see nature, but not touch it; fear of infections transmission still couldn't take away the wonder of this new experience. The latter, meanwhile, captures a time when the gripes of mild illness descend into sleep with the soothing accompaniment of improvised music.

'Liminal Night Feeds', as the name suggests, is all about the nocturnal rhythms of infants: the space between waking and sleep, breathing and movement, and parental synchronisation. The music takes on a jittery, almost illusory quality as time and space fold in on themselves.

As with the first two volumes of 'Displacement Activity', the final track sees Steve take a leftfield turn. As the mood changes to a more claustrophobic atmosphere through 'Ever Onward' and 'Liminal Night Feeds', it might be expected that this would continue inwards and downwards. In contrast, Steve flings open the window to let in bursts of electronic light underpinned by defiant beats and a pulsating bassline. It's a jagged, hesitant kind of hope – how could it be otherwise in these times – but hope, nonetheless. The future is unwritten, and we end on a note of positivity. New music, new challenges and a new optimism will surely come.