



See Blue Audio – Press Release

‘The Inner Circle’

Fragile X

See Blue Audio SBA #021

- 1. One Way**
- 2. Kinning Park**
- 3. Shields Road**
- 4. West Street**
- 5. Home**

Release date: 25 June 2021

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

2021 has already become a very productive year for Glaswegian electronic artist Fragile X. His Bricolage label has released a wealth of distinct and diverse music, while the Fragile X album ‘Between Worlds’ on the Soundtracking The Void imprint received justified praise and support. Now he returns to See Blue Audio with his third themed collection, ‘The Inner Circle’, and the twenty-first release on the label.

The story of ‘The Inner Circle’ goes back to 2016 and ‘The Outer Circle’ released on Bricolage. Subtitled ‘A Semi-Conscious Experience’, it captured the mood of a Sunday morning after a long weekend and travelling home on a busy subway train from the West End of Glasgow. Field recordings made on the journey were used as the basis for a series of tracks that reflect this special post-clubbing state of mind.

Field recordings also form the core of ‘The Inner Circle’, but whereas its predecessor was a little raw and rough around the edges, this long overdue follow-up is more refined and thoughtful, more mature even, in terms of both production and ideas. This is also reflected in the setting of the field recordings: 10pm on a quiet weeknight and travelling from the south side of the city. In both cases, the destination and final stop were the same – home – but ‘The Inner Circle’ is more introspective in tone. Essentially, this is the story of the subway environment expressed through music.

This second collection of five tracks, predominately beatless, begins with 'One Way' and the implication is clear: this journey has an ending. As often happens, we experience a sense of exhilaration when entering a subterranean world, and the dreamlike, slow-motion synths are reminiscent of 'Departure from Nowhere' and 'Colour in Motion', the opening tracks on 'Maps of the Lost' and 'Chromatherapy' respectively, both released on See Blue Audio in 2020. This is followed by 'Kinning Park', a suburb of Glasgow, and we are now fully immersed in an underground world of metal and machines. There's a feeling of anxiety, even claustrophobia, to this track with its eerie bleeps and shadowy sounds.

As we reach 'Shields Road' and closer to home, the atmosphere is lighter, lifted by ethereal washes of electronica and trippy beats, which appear for the first time on 'The Inner Circle'. Then it's onto the post-industrial area of 'West Street' with its euphoric ambient tapestry of sound, which breaks down to an electronic pulse taken from a field recording of a train in motion, a hypnotic sound that surely resonates with us all.

Finally, 'Home' as the train pulls to a stop, and we pass through the ticket barrier and into the cool night air. Exquisite and cinematic, it's a sublime ending to the story, but as is often the case, tinged with sadness now that the journey is over. As in life, most journeys are a bittersweet mixture of highs and lows, tension and excitement, communication and contemplation.

'The Inner Circle' is a musical dialogue between a mechanical underground world and the stories of the travellers through that world, as imagined by Fragile X, who fleetingly appear and disappear in the short stops between stations. The field recordings are far more than just background sounds, and they have been looped and integrated into the music that surrounds them. Trains approaching, brakes screeching, doors closing, tannoy announcements, cables buzzing, dripping water and the clang of metal, the buzz of commuters, the very stuff of life. In the context of 2021, it's also the sound of the slow and hopeful return to normality from the coronavirus pandemic.

Mastered by Richard Jones at Dark Fidelity Hi Fi Studios.