



Neutral Milk Hotel's In the Aeroplane Over the Sea (33 1/3)

By Kim Cooper, Kim Cooper

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Of all the recordings to emerge from the Athens-via-Denver collective called Elephant 6, Neutral Milk Hotel's second album is the one that has worked its way under the most skins. Magnet magazine named it the best album of the 1990s, and *Creative Loafing* recently devoted a cover story to one fan's quest to understand why band leader Jeff Mangum dropped out of sight soon after *Aeroplane's* release. The record sells steadily to an audience that finds it through word of mouth. Weird, beautiful, absorbing, difficult, *In The Aeroplane Over the Sea* is a surrealist text loosely based on the life, suffering and reincarnation of Anne Frank, with guest appearances from a pair of Siamese twins menaced by the cold and carnivores, a two-headed boy bobbing in a jar, anthropomorphic vegetables and a variety of immature erotic horrors. Mangum sings his dreamlike narratives with a dreamer's intensity, his creaky, off key voice occasionally breaking as he struggles to complete each dense couplet. The music is like nothing else in the 90s indie underground: a psychedelic brass band, its members self-taught, forging polychromatic washes of mood and tribute. The songs stick to one narrow key, the images repeat and circle back, and to listen is to be absorbed into a singular, heart-rending vision.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"Much of the NeutralMilk story has been pieced together over the years, but never ascomprehensively as in Kim Cooper's Neutral Milk Hotel's In The Aeroplane Overthe Sea." — *Real Detroit Weekly*, December 7, 2005 (Real Detroit Weekly)

"These books are individual love letters to thealbums themselves, shedding light on the deepest, most tucked-away aspects ofthe creative processes that produced them. While reading about music is neverquite the same as hearing it, and no prose could ever emulate the samecarnival-like, haunting, shiver-inducing sound that is *In the Aeroplane Over the Sea*, Cooper's billet doux comes prettyclose." — *Chord Magazine*, Winter2005/06 (Chord Magazine)

"In her new book *33 1/3: In the Aeroplane Over the Sea...* KimCooper... unravels the rumors and demystifies much of the legend that has wounditself around songwriter Jeff Mangum since the Athens band's 1998 breakup... Coopereffectively reminds the reader that Neutral Milk Hotel was a band of realpeople-dear friends- playing instruments, but reinforces the idea that *Aerpolane* and its songs are a uniquedocument of a time, place and creative community. After only six weeks, thebook has gone back to press for a second printing..."- Chris Hassiotis, *Flagpole Magazine*

"Cooper's 2005 book on NMH and Aeroplane is part of the 33 1/3 series that treats cult-classic albums like dissertation fodder, and hers does a particularly stellar job of demystifying—as much as possible—the destitute and devoted dudes behind Neutral Milk Hotel's underground stardom. Her strengths as a social historian lend this read a certain depth that most Spin writers could never muster. Somehow, she miraculously manages to do an album of this ilk—as resistant to the bitter end as it's been to the spotlight—poetic justice." — *Los Angeles Alternative*, February 2006 (Los Angeles Alternative)

"There is a treasure-trove of trivia for the NMH aficionado, and a contextual introduction and passionate advertisement for the newcomer. Also, with [Cooper's] detailed account of the NMH community, Cooper gives us a sort of normative sociology of the kind of scene that can produce great art." -*Ukula Magazine*, Spring 2006<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

"Cooper delves into the band's roots, setting up the relationships between all of the musicians that made up the Elephant 6 collective and banks like Apples In Stereo and the Olivia Tremor Control. With her easygoing narrative, Cooper achieves one of the hardest things to do when introducing readers to perfect strangers: she infuses each of the main players with a personality. When finishing *In The Aeroplane Over The Sea* the reader not only has a sense of who Jess Mangrum and friends are, but also what they were trying to accomplish with their music. Cooper explains why the album's audience and importance grow with each passing year while doing a fine job of also relating the music's immense charm and ...dare I say...magic." -*Alt.Culture.Guide* <?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

'Cooper has managed to write the best music book that I've read so far... Awe alongside simple, direct speech. It's a delicate balance, that Cooper's excellent writing manages to preserve throughout the whole book...And this book doesn't only give information and wrap this exemplary album with an excellent text, it also gives me, and the rest of the prisoners of Jeff Mangum's scorched and wounded world, the excuse and the opportunity to climb on the rooftops and shout: 'For crying out loud, people, you better get to know this album now, before the aeroplane over the sea crashes exactly on that island with the place for only one record.' ~ Guy Hajaj, Haoneg.com, 2006<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

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About the Author

Kim Cooper is the editrix of Scram, an occasional journal of unpopular culture dedicated to celebrating unjustly neglected artists in the worlds of music, literature, film/TV, comics and bohemia. With fellow 33 1/3 scribe David Smay, she is co-editor of the anthologies Bubblegum Music is the Naked Truth and Lost in the Grooves: Scram's Capricious Guide to the Music You Missed. A third generation Angeleno, Kim offers offbeat bus tours of the city's crimes, literature and architectural gems through Esotouric, and blogs at the crime-a-day 1947project.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Smith:

Here thing why that Neutral Milk Hotel's In the Aeroplane Over the Sea (33 1/3) are different and trustworthy to be yours. First of all reading a book is good however it depends in the content from it which is the content is as delightful as food or not. Neutral Milk Hotel's In the Aeroplane Over the Sea (33 1/3) giving you information deeper since different ways, you can find any reserve out there but there is no book that similar with Neutral Milk Hotel's In the Aeroplane Over the Sea (33 1/3). It gives you thrill examining journey, its open up your current eyes about the thing that will happened in the world which is possibly can be happened around you. You can bring everywhere like in recreation area, café, or even in your technique home by train. If you are having difficulties in bringing the printed book maybe the form of Neutral Milk Hotel's In the Aeroplane Over the Sea (33 1/3) in e-book can be your alternate.

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