

Puluche Album Review Rubric ©

Artist: Analogue Wave

Album Title: Casimir (2014)

Criteria

Rating

Categories	4 - Exemplary	3 - Proficient	2 - Developing	1 - Underdeveloped	Rating
<u>Compositions</u>	Every song is quality and has a distinctive appeal of its own. Tracks have a perfect flow and continuity that enhance the album's overall appeal.	Many quality songs with some distinctive appeal. Tracks have a good flow and continuity that enhance the album's overall appeal.	Some quality songs with distinctive appeal but not sustained. Track flow and continuity have little effect on album's overall appeal.	Few to no quality songs lacking any distinctive appeal. Track flow and continuity have little/poor effect on album's overall appeal.	15
<u>Breaking Ground</u>	Has impressive elements of high creativity and is experimentally innovative. Developing own signature sound. Shows extreme growth and/or potential as a substantial and influential artist.	Features elements of creativity and uniqueness. Shows growth and/or potential as a developing and influential artist.	Has very few moments of creativity and uniqueness. Shows a little growth and/or some potential as a developing artist. Displays some stagnation or notable regression as an established artist.	Has no creativity and uniqueness. Shows no growth and/or little potential as a developing or established artist.	17.5
<u>Engagement</u>	Music has a transcending quality with numerous songs that grab the listener on respective emotional/social levels. Many songs have an addictive effect and memorable quality.	Music has transcending qualities with some songs that grab the listener on respective emotional/social levels. Some songs have an addictive effect and memorable quality.	Music has some transcending qualities with few songs that appeal on respective emotional/social levels, as well as having any addictive or memorable qualities.	Music has minimal transcending qualities and few to no songs that appeal on respective emotional/social levels. No positive memorable qualities.	15
<u>Lyrics</u>	Has a strong lyrical voice with multiple thought-provoking messages with clear and/or possible meanings and depth.	Has notable lyrical voice with some thought-provoking messages and/or possible meanings and depth.	Has limited lyrical voice with few-to-no thought-provoking messages, meanings and depth.	Has a weak lyrical voice with no thought-provoking messages or meanings and seriously lacks any depth.	15
<u>Production</u>	Masterful sound quality with noticeable studio techniques employed that demand headphone inquiry. Vision flawlessly executed. Overall packaging and artwork effectively compliments and enhances album enjoyment.	Very good sound quality with some noticeable studio techniques that demand headphone inquiry. Vision is acceptable. Overall packaging and artwork compliments album enjoyment.	Inconsistent sound quality with questionable studio techniques employed. Vision is questionable. Overall packaging and artwork fails to compliment album.	Questionable to poor sound quality. Lacks vision. Overall packaging and artwork fails to compliment album.	15

Comments

Let's start with a quick look at the world of quantum physics shall we...Lifting liberally from Wikipedia, we can see that the Casimir can be described as thus, "The typical example is of two [uncharged](#) metallic plates in a [vacuum](#), placed a few nanometers apart. In a [classical](#) description, the lack of an external field also means that there is no field between the plates, and no force would be measured between them. When this field is instead studied using the [QED vacuum](#) of [quantum electrodynamics](#), it is seen that the plates do affect the [virtual photons](#) which constitute the field, and generate a net force - either an attraction or a repulsion depending on the specific arrangement of the two plates. Although the Casimir effect can be expressed in terms of [virtual particles](#) interacting with the objects, it is best described and more easily calculated in terms of the [zero-point energy](#) of a [quantized field](#) in the intervening space between the objects."

Clear as day, yeah? Look, I don't know much about this stuff; when it comes to science I'm kind of with Sam Cooke, but I do know about the force of attraction - looks over his glasses at all you ladies out there - and what I do know is that Del and Andy, the men behind the monkey masks, have made an album that you will find hard to resist. They have been growing in support since some inauspicious beginnings a little over 18 months ago. They are already on to album two, and it sounds like these two fellers are not resting on any laurels.

But what does Analogue Wave sound like...? Well, the closest thing I can think of to put it in to the common music journalist parlance is that it sounds like a dub version of popular rockers, Therapy. Not necessarily borrowing that sound of theirs, that's dispelled within minutes of track one, but more in attitude and the dark places that the lyrics of this album take you to.

However, the album opens with a gentle piano sound reminiscent of Olafur Arnauks recent work, before a portentous sounding, quasi-glam rock beat begins, then martial sounding snares kick in. As soon as the singing starts with "Your words whisper through the trees, stalking me like animals," we know we are not in a safe place from now on. This song swells over a synth backing and is given an extra special boost from the guesting Resistance Choir who are apparently neighbors of the band. The choir add another dimension to the song, which balances the troubled sounding singer of the song. It all bodes well for the rest of the record. If I had to make a small complaint, it's that it took awhile to fade out, but it's the tiniest of gripes.

The album is one that wears its influences on its sleeve, but not in a way that feels remotely derivative. It's the sound of a band alive to the possibilities of sounds, the oscillations of *Casimir* powering through and creating new waves together. For example, the Arabic sounds that are woven through "Dead Cat Bounce" otherwise claustrophobic sound, or the digital skank of instrumental, "Scatter."

I defy anyone not to wriggle a bit when this starts; even the dead will have a bit of a horizontal bogle. It's almost like the clouds have disappeared from what is an otherwise dark LP up to this point. Is it an eye in a storm? Is it a bird, is it a plane? I don't care. It's fantastic, and you're deaf if you don't like it, so there. It's either a fantastic live opener or a chance for the singer to have a piss mid gig, but it's a corker none the less. This eventually gives way to the strange disco of "Levan," which is all dark Pet Shop Boys intro, and a synth bass that makes me think of Frankie Goes To Hollywood remixes, or that brief period in the mid-80s when The Cure went twisted funk on "Let's Go To Bed." Over the top of this, there are pleas for dignity and

	<p>answers. It's not much to ask, especially when it's couched in these terms.</p> <p>The album springs about, gambling across the electronic genres like a kid in a keyboard shop, and it can be a bit unnerving, but never dull, especially when we get to the start of "Solution." It comes on like the sort of thing that brought Aphex Twin out of retirement, and will also single handedly get the much requested Bentley Rhythm Ace reunion up and a- running, and it doesn't let up. I got a bit confused by references to the final solution, but it's not about <i>that</i> – it's much more Balearic than that. Love is the final solution, and who will argue with that.</p>	
<u>Commendations</u>	<p>Returning to an earlier theme, this album is a very real case of dub therapy (see what I did there?). It washes you clean on some tracks, like the righteous and dubby "Scatter," the manic "Levan," and it knocks the wind out of the proverbial sales on the darker material like album opener, "I Feel Hollow" or "Sustain."</p> <p>This is a sound of a band in love with sounds and the possibilities of the digital world. I think album number two is nowhere near what they are capable of, and I mean this is a good way. I suspect they are an enthralling and dynamic live act. I keep expecting it to turn into Depeche Mode's 101 live album, especially the opener to that record, "Pimpf." I don't know how flattered they will be with that comparison but it makes sense, and I think these songs will truly fly in the wild. Let them fly to your ears, support them and they will continue to grow and oscillate wildly.</p>	
<u>Next Steps</u>	<p>This is Analogue Wave's second album, so the logical place to go is back to their debut album, <i>N.L.G.W.V.</i> Go on, then they can afford some consonants to go with the dissonance. The album was funded via fundit.ie with a variety of options for those interested, and is also now available on the band's Bandcamp page. I suggest you hot foot it over there now and get a copy. You won't be disappointed.</p>	
<u>Reviewer</u>	Mat Riches	IRC: Carl Whitaker