

http://www.silentmediaprojects.com/makings_make_weatherpatterns_derekpiotr.html



Since 2011, Derek Piotr has released 3 solo albums, as well as enough singles, EPs, and remix albums to keep anyone interested in his work busy digging for a while. He has done dozens of web and radio performances, as well as maintained a consistent presence as a live musician. His work has provided a constant and focused investigation into the human voice as sound source and compositional centerpiece. His resume includes an internship with Meredith Monk, a nomination by the jury for Prix Ars Electronica (2012), and a feature on Resonance FM.

Silent Media - Your music seems to have made some significant and rapid evolutionary jumps since your first album, *Agora*. However, as evolution goes, there is a strong aesthetic and conceptual thread that can be pulled through it all. There are a lot of things that set *Weather Patterns* apart from your previous work: the inclusion of your poetry, the thematic collaboration with photographer Meirre Todao, the collaboration with a countertenor vocalist Mikah Meyer, as well as the musical reliance on more textural and sustained compositional elements. Was this in any way a result of an effort to make the multiple components on *Weather Patterns* work together more smoothly?

Derek Piotr - Language and music are generally quite separate for me, but because this project ended up being entirely wordless vocal music, I thought poetry would be a nice supplement. Overall in my solo projects I seem to be using words more and more, though I have almost never seen them as necessary. I actually want to get back to wordlessness... While working with Mikah, the only instruction I gave was that whatever he sang be wordless, and, using that as a starting point, I gave him very little direction otherwise.

Silent Media - To my knowledge, *Weather Patterns* is the first time you've released your poetry in print. Is this correct? Do you have a preference of reading vs. publishing your poetry?

Derek Piotr - My poetry has been published both online and in print several times before. However, as I

mentioned above, words and music are usually things i think very separately about. In general my poetry is extremely personal, more so than my music, so I tend to enjoy reading vs writing poetry, especially the works of E.E. Cummings, Lorca, Rumi, Gertrude Stein, Wallace Stevens...lately poetry compilations from Pakistan and Dave Alvin are especially nice.

Silent Media - I like your response, but I think I could have worded my question better: Do you see your poetry as something that should be heard -- read aloud -- or read in silence?

Derek Piotr - years ago I co-ran a weekly open mic and workshop series for a year, so I am comfortable with the notion that my works could be read aloud, but i'd always preferred them to be read on page. i think it provides greater intimacy and allows for more interpretation.

Silent Media - Your poetry strikes me as potently minimalist, if not striving for a state of complete stillness; whereas your music, with a few exceptions, seems to come from a place of constant motion. Can you talk a little about how these two mediums vary as an outlet for you and perhaps give us some insight into how your goals are different with each?

Derek Piotr - My poetry has mainly been my way to document my life in an extremely abstract and personal sense, with a lot of relation to specific moments and nature. I've written hundreds of poems, but they have gone and will go unpublished. Music is something else entirely, it almost feels as though it comes not from me but through me at times, the music is my duty to transmit. Music is also a really wonderful bridge for the moments in-between words, in general I have always been of the opinion that words are too limiting and actually quite clumsy, but I feel music can potentially fill every gap on the human emotional spectrum.

Silent Media - You and Meire have been coupling your work for the imagery on the packaging of your previous releases since the get-go. With you in the Northeast U.S. and Meire in Brazil, how did you two first join forces?

Derek Piotr - I've known Meire for years. When I started to look for artwork for my first album, AGORA, she casually suggested I use one of her photos, and almost immediately I found one that perfectly fit the vision I had for that sound world. On every cover since, i've focused on working with her and she's completely slam dunked the idiosyncratic time-space location I've had for each record. It's an enormous miracle to me every time. She is amazingly versatile and very professional. I'm extremely fortunate to work with her.

Silent Media - For Weather Patterns, you contacted Mikah Meyer, a countertenor vocalist to obtain the sound sources for the album. What was your motivation for wanting to work with a countertenor vocalist in general?

Derek Piotr - Since my main focus in my work is the voice, I had always wanted to work within certain vocal situations, a professional choir and a community (untrained) choral group are still on my bucket list...anyway, working with a countertenor was always a goal of mine. I found out about Mikah through a job I had doing event listings, and to my great fortune he was coming into my area a few months from when I got in touch. I am very humbled by the amount of synchronicity in my work thus far, particularly with this project, and can only hope it will continue to flow forth...With Mikah specifically, I was fascinated by the quality of his voice. It seemed to effortlessly insinuate elemental forces, as well as suggest some kind of earlier music, perhaps even pre-Palestrina...

Silent Media - With regard to the current political and environmental realities surrounding the topic of climate change, can you talk a little bit about the main idea behind Weather Patterns?

Derek Piotr - I think this was just something I wanted to hint at without getting directly political. Nature is a huge influence on my work, and times are certainly changing, I think perpetual awareness of these issues is important. It is the first step towards finding solutions.

Silent Media - Right around the same time Weather Patterns was released, you released Tempatempat (which is a fantastic album, by the way!). What can we expect from you in the future? Tours? Future projects?

Derek Piotr - I am at work on a follow-up to Tempatempat, as well as a few commissions and full length collaborative albums. I think I'll always be producing solo studio works, they take a lot of discipline and are very necessary to me; the collaborations are the fun part.

More on Derek can be found [here](#).

More on Weather Patterns can be found [here](#), and the bandcamp page is [here](#).

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