

WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT:

ALEC K. REDFEARN & THE EYESORES

THE BLIND SPOT

CUNEIFORM

2007

Lineup: Alec K. Redfearn (voice, accordion, jawharp, organ, slide/fuzz guitar, loops); Frank Difficult (loops, processing, electronics); Orion Rigel Dommissie (voice and organ); Jason McGill (alto sax); Laura Gulley (violin, viola, voice) Matt McLaren (drums, glockenspiel, percussion); Ann Schattle (horn in F); Erica Schattle (bassoon); Domenick Panzarella (electric guitar); Steve Jobe (hurdy-gurdy, drone hurdy-gurdy, gong-drum); Sarah Tolan-Mee (violin); Olivia Geiger (violin); Margie Wienk (contrabass); Chris Sadlers (contrabass); Ellen Santaniello (soprano voice)

“Those of you looking for some thoughtful, intriguing and varied music should look no further than “The Blind Spot”, the latest album from Alec K Redfearn and the Eyesores. Full of emotional songs and a host of instruments, the album is deeply absorbing, the instrumentation meaning the songs get pulled into unexpected places. Throughout, the droning accordion gives the album a Eastern-European folk feel... Equally interesting are the oblique lyrics that read like Dadaist fairy tales, both the words and music fitting together like hand and glove.”

- Simon Lewis, *Terrascope Online*, August 2007, www.terrascope.co.uk

“... it's refreshing and reassuring that his latest release, *The Blind Spot*, turns inward from the showy frills and trills of that ["punk cabaret"] scene, giving us a **careful song cycle that's more Terry Riley than Danny Elfman or Kurt Weill**. The album leads off with a two-minute mouth harp solo called "The Perforated Veil" and it's a great induction into the world that Redfearn has built... Metallic and breathy at the same time, it begins to hint at both Redfearn's gallery of weary-eyed addicts and lost souls that inhabit this album and the focused sense of purpose with which he's approached its composition.

The songs on *The Blind Spot* weave through each other, sharing melodies and lyrics and getting us from one point to the other through dreamy logic. ... Phrases repeat over gradual shifts in instrumentation, from lush string arrangements and bellowing accordion to washy, tick-tocking percussion. Redfearn and vocalist Ellen Santaniello combine for a fitting mixture of Old World religious searching and Lynchian groundlessness.

...imagistic...work of art...”- Matt Parish, *Performer*, www.performermag.com

“The Blind Spot is Alec K. Redfearn & the Eyesores' saddest album yet. It also contains some of the group's prettiest arrangements. ... Lyrics are artful and evocative, vocals remain subdued, arrangements are graceful throughout, with the accordion still occupying the center spot.”

- Francois Couture, *All Music Guide*, www.allmusic.com

“Determinedly out of step with musical fashions of the day (he gravitated to playing accordion because he found grunge revisionist), [Redfearn] nevertheless found his gypsy-folk-noise-drone-style of composition firmly in vogue last year, with the resurgence of folk and Balkan music.

...*The Blind Spot*, [is] an ambitious song cycle that incorporates choral arrangements and a soprano vocalist, lending a true requiem-like feel to this meditation on loss and addiction. **Redfearn is in top form here, directing the magic collision of spiralling waltzes with the drone of a specially built hurdy-gurdy.** Despite the dark theme, the music is still exquisitely pretty... Artful yet entirely genuine, this is the most accomplished Eyesores record to date.” - Helen Spitzer, *Exclaim!*, July 2007, www.exclaim.ca

“Alec Redfearn's "Myra" wafts out of the Victrola, uh, the CD player, like a parlor song written circa 1885. Its séance-like insubstantiality is maintained with images of a dead girl's reappearance...but there are... references to infomercials and naugahyde... **Redfearn gives us a sort of neo-archaeo-folk, evoking Michigan band the Great Lakes Myth Society or even Sufjan Stevens.**

... This is not like music played in the United States since Edgar Allan Poe, except maybe in Virgil Thompson's salon. ... It could be work music for the studios of eccentric mid-century artists Joseph Cornell, Pavel Tchelitchev or John Graham.

And it grows "curiouser and curiouser"... A composition called "The Flesh of the Drum" draws inspiration from Hieronymus Bosch's painting "The Garden of Earthly Delights" in the Prado museum, Madrid, like the musical instruments depicted in it that were recreated and appear on the album.” - Michael R. Mosher, *Leonardo*, September 2007

“The central theme of "*I am the Resurrection and the Light*", the songcycle that makes up a large part of *The Blind Spot* is drug addiction and loss, and it's a eulogy for friends of Redfearn who lost their lives battling an addiction. ...

The music influenced by a plethora of bands and composers, but those of the Rock In Opposition movement are the most prominent. ...that type of music...seems to exist somewhere outside of time... they share some elements [with]...*Sleepytime Gorilla Museum*, but **The Eyesores**...are more refined and much more subtle. ... It's...**a more dreamy mix of contemporary composed music, folkmusics from all over the world, cabaret and progressive rock to create a more pensive mood.** ... [rating: 5 stars]” - Martjin Busnik, *Musique Machine*, www.musiquemachine.com

“...Alec K. Redfearn...doesn't sit still for very long. ... the changes from album to album are both vast and impressive. His latest release with the Eyesores, *The Blind Spot* **finds Redfearn's music at its most grand and orchestrated...**

... “Queen of the Wires” is probably the best track here, aided nicely by vocal harmonies arranged by Marissa Nadler. ... Neutral Milk Hotel comparisons... It is a...essentially folk-driven tune about a dead girl. ... Redfearn manages to take a page from the Blues book here, building the song on repetition, letting the stilted delivery of lyrics pluck over the smooth strings and percussion. The chorus elevates...but the song never loses its restraint, which makes it all the more haunting in the end.

...noisy bridges...appear sporadically between tracks on the album. ...the noise experiments themselves...drone and swirl...

There is an ambition to this album... *The Blind Spot* is the sound of an artist who tries it all at once...”

- Matthew Fiand, *PopMatters*, September 28, 2007, www.popmatters.com

“This is the most concept-based project of the group. It is intended as a eulogy for several friends of Alec who died of drug abuse, and a meditation on his own abuse...about the blind spot...”

The songs are arranged at first like a beautiful arranged street theatre concept, with the accordion leading the compositions (but not leading the arrangements) often giving a circus/fair-ground like effect. The energy builds up as tensions...

The operatic voices...add extra drama as well as comfort and support... Here and there strange electronic (or not) sounds... One of the strangest instruments used is a drone-hurdy-gurdy, developed for *Steve Jobe's* opera ‘Jean D'Arc’ (1993), and a gong-drum, one of a series of instruments inspired by the painting ‘Garden of Earthly delight’ by *Hieronymus Bosch* ... An interesting and...ambitious theatre-like musical concept.”

- Gerald Van Waes, *PsycheMusic*, progressive.homestead.com

“A beautifully intriguing album. ...the first of a series of jewels begins in an unassuming, gently personal kind of Eastern-European kind of folk tune.

The melodies are ravishing throughout - sparse, simple with twists, solemn and uplifting. Instruments are poignant glockenspeils and welcoming hurdy-gurdy. ... Alec K himself has a rich yet fragile voice, joined by equally delicious high female harmonies (often very reminiscent of Lake Of Puppies or Sea Nymphs) - classical voices with a hint of eccentric Americana. ... I Am The Resurrection and the Light song cycle: eight interlocking, often dazzling pieces. Soaked with genuine feeling and deep spirituality, these songs fuse 20th/21st century contemporary composition with dark cabaret and klezmer. Beginning as bittersweet, bright and slightly strange sea shanties very very reminiscent of William D Drake...strangeness...sounding like 65daysofstatic playing John Adams and Steve Reich... Songs that also journey to some dark and lonely places... However bleak, there's extraordinary depth to this music... The melodies...promise hope and celebrate fragile humans despite the darkness. Haunting, compelling, quite unique, 'The Blind Spot' is an album to live with, to keep returning to." - *Organ Magazine*, #243

"...*The Blind Spot*...is a dark, alien venture into left-of-centre experimentation.

The band plays a bleak swath of drone, noise and folk... *Queen Of The Wires*... with its pairing of male and female vocals, some bassoon from Erica Schattle, and violin, is reminiscent of dark neo-folk band Black Tape For A Blue Girl. Redfearn's accordion...evokes...Finnish accordionist Kimmo Pohjonen. ...

...bulk of the CD, the eight-song conceptual *I Am The Resurrection And The Light - A Song Cycle*... takes the listener past references to The Velvet Underground, Russian neo-Kraut band Vespero, Stereolab, early Tangerine Dream, Jethro Tull (minus the flute) and German experimentalists Einsturzende Neubaten. The descending and ascending electronics of *Blue On White* and the brooding percussion of *The Radiator Hymn* set the pace... the last two tracks of the song cycle... feature customized instruments performed by Steve Jobe, the drone hurdy-gurdy and the gong-drum. This CD will most likely appeal to any fan of avant-garde music or dark, droning Velvets-style rock. ... Conclusion: 7 out of 10"

- Jim Corcoran, *Dutch Progressive Rock Page*, Vol. 6, 2008

"Alec K. Redfearn And The Eyesores... take elements from all types of music and fuse them into an offbeat mixture of indie-pop, folk and neo-classical genres. Imagine a hybrid of lively systemic music of Michael Nyman fused with many an act on the Pickled Egg label.

... Album-wise THE BLIND SPOT...excellent musicianship and much in the way of experimentation... Occasionally, on the tracks sung by Laura Gulley, there's an air of the long-lost excellent Miranda Sex Garden in the music. It is an album full of surprises though, not least that in the final track they wig-it-out going totally abstract and avant-garde. ..." - Alan Freeman, *Audion*, #55

"2007 TOP LISTS ... Delire Musical's TOP 50 for 2007 and Delire Actuel's TOP 30 picks, ...

1-5 ... Redfearn, Alec K. The Blind Spot 2007 cd ..." - Francois Couture, *Delire Musical/Delire Actuel (CFLX)*

"...here's the HQ favorites from 2007. ...here's some mostly unknown but very good 2007 albums ... Alec K. Redfearn and the Eyesores "The Blind Spot" ..." - Larry "Fuzz-O" Dolman, *Blastitude*, #26, WINTER/SPRING 2008, www.blastitude.com