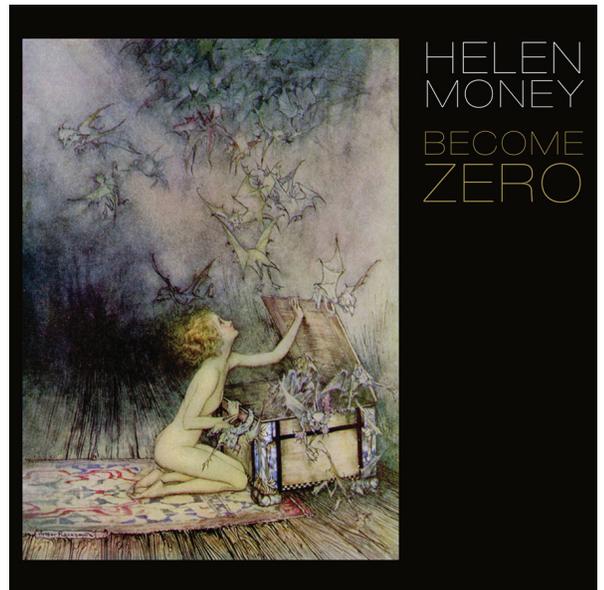


Helen Money

Become Zero

Thrill Jockey Records - September 2016

Helen Money's *Become Zero* continues cellist Alison Chesley's exploration of emotive and intense music. Written after the death of both of her parents, *Become Zero* amplifies Helen Money's musical ferocity with palpable sadness and striking beauty. Using her extensively manipulated cello, Chesley joins forces once more with drummer Jason Roeder (Sleep, Neurosis), Rachel Grimes (Rachel's) and collaborator and co-producer Will Thomas (who provides sound effects and samples) on an album that is incredibly personal and visceral.



Through her music, Chesley takes us on a journey as she grapples with the concepts and the emotions of life's end: loss, isolation, sorrow, peace and resolution. "Vanished Star" imagines a place where this life and what lies beyond it intersect in an eerie waltz between the piano and cello. "Facing the Sun," takes its title from the loosely-translated name of the Tataviam Indians, who lived in the San Fernando Valley where Chesley grew up. "It also refers to my father who loved the Valley and loved sitting outside and feeling the sun on his skin," Chesley says. "Radiate" begins in a place of struggle and hardship which is eventually transcended. The song starts with a dissonant, distorted chord on the cello and builds to a place where it fights with itself before finally falling apart. "To end the piece I wanted it to sound like it was dissolving into space - another reference to my father, who worked on the Apollo and Space Shuttle programs," says Chesley. "Will and I even managed to replicate the sound of a satellite pinging at the end. The ending feels very peaceful to me. Resolved."

On "Blood and Bone," Chesley brought in pianist Rachel Grimes. While "Blood and Bone" is acoustic, don't assume that it's a gentler piece. "One of the things I struggle with as a composer is writing for my cello without any effects, especially music that is as powerful as my amplified pieces," Chesley says. She had been practicing the 5th cello suite by JS Bach, a "very dark piece," as she wrote *Become Zero*. In this suite, Bach has the cellist tune the top string down a whole step, and the music itself is very dissonant and powerful. Chesley wanted to incorporate the piano which adds a nice depth and percussiveness to the texture. So she opened the piece with those very stark chords and brought the cello in, letting it gradually take over.

Much of *Become Zero* was recorded at Thomas' Los Angeles studio. Additional recording was done at Grimes' studio outside of Louisville, Kentucky, and at East/West Studios in Hollywood. While Chesley had previously exclusively recorded analog to tape with Steve Albini, she went in a new direction for her Thrill Jockey debut. "I wanted to explore the freedom provided by digital recording," Alison explains. "there is simply more flexibility with regards to multi-tracking...such as interfacing with electronic sounds, supplementing tracks with MIDI sounds, and ease of movement between the analog and digital domain. *Become Zero's* songs called for a much wider palate of sounds." Roeder's drums were recorded separately at East/West Studios on a vintage Neve console. Chesley's expanded approach to recording results in a beautiful mix of acoustic and processed sounds, a perfect fit for an album that is at once highly visceral and delicately ethereal.

Helen Money is equally at home in the New Music realm as she is in the New Metal realm. Chesley has toured extensively with an incredible array of musicians, including Shellac, Neurosis, Sleep, Russian Circles, Magma, Agalloch, Earth, and Nina Nastasia. Both Portishead and Shellac selected her for their respective All Tomorrow's Parties festivals. Helen Money toured with Bob Mould in 2015, including a performance on the Late Show with David Letterman. Her history of collaborations with Chicago improvisers is extensive.

Chesley currently resides in Los Angeles and will be participating in a monthlong residency at the venue Complex throughout August 2016. Helen Money is actively touring throughout Europe and the United States. She will be touring again extensively in the fall and throughout 2017.

US: Lily Oberman | Thrill Jockey | lily@thrilljockey.com | 312-492-9634
US: Mike Boyd | Thrill Jockey | mike@thrilljockey.com | 312-492-9634
UK/EU: Ken Li | Thrill Jockey | ken@thrilljockey.com | +44 (0)20 7278 8086

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