

HORROR PLAYLIST

OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE STRIPPED!

Words: Tyler Doupe

Dante Tomaselli has made a name for himself as an indie film director with surreal, horrifying stories to tell. But more recently, he has also been gaining recognition for his electronic music. Tomaselli's previous musical stylings include the albums *Scream in the Dark*, *The Doll*, *Nightmare*, and *Witches*. His latest offering, *Out of Body Experience* takes a decidedly different approach from his previous outings. It sounds a lot like it could have been a synth pop score from an '80s movie or video game.

Out of Body Experience is (slightly) less focused on terrifying its listeners than previous Tomaselli albums and offers up more melodic beats than his four previous auditory overtures. The cacophonous and terrifying resonances designed to make you jump out of your seat have been (largely) replaced with catchy synthesised beats.

Although Tomaselli has changed things up a bit with his fifth auditory outing, he hasn't abandoned his horror roots entirely. There is still a menacing quality to his newest collection of tracks. The song titles remain spooky with names like 'Death Ship' and 'The Snake' but, on many of the tracks, the composer's usual macabre approach is combined with toe-tapping beats and dance inducing hooks.

From the first track, 'Astral Projection', the listener knows they are taking a trip back in time. This song quickly conjures memories of '80s television and cinema. Like much of what comes after it, this song is both catchy and intense.

The track, 'The Evil' is among the most reminiscent of Tomaselli's previous filmic (and musical) work. The listener can hear menacing dialogue recited by what sounds like a fanatical street preacher. Tomaselli has always hinted at a dubious relationship with religion by way of his creative output. His work shows that religion has been a major part of his life but that same work also frequently showcases his disdain and revulsion toward the fanaticism and judgmental tactics so commonly passed off under the guise of faith. 'Door to Hell' is one more such example. It's a pleasant mixture of unholy chanting, spooky noises, and eerie sound effects set to a slick, electronic beat.

'Earthling' is another track that calls back to Tomaselli's roots at times. Towards the end of its runtime, the listener can hear a child whispering, "They're here." Songs such as this serve as a bridge between the director/composer's previous, darker work and the somewhat lighter tone of many of the tracks on *Out of Body Experience*. This serves to remind us that in a Tomaselli album, the things that go bump in the night and the paranormal are never very far away.

Tracks like 'Scorpio Rising', 'The Lighthouse', and 'Venus' may not be particularly spooky but they are melodic and incredibly catchy. They show Tomaselli's prowess as a producer of digital beats. He proves himself to be capable of making music with appeal both within and beyond the horror community.

I am a fan of Tomaselli's work both behind the camera and behind the keyboard. But my primary complaint in regards to his previous audio efforts

has been that some of the tracks were a bit lengthy. *Out of Body Experience*, however, is pretty close to the perfect runtime for an instrumental album. The songs are short and punchy and the entire disc clocks in at roughly 35-minutes. It's not too short; it's not too long. It's just right.

My main criticism of his latest offering is that some of the tracks get a little repetitive on repeat listening. Similar sounding beats are used on a few of the songs. But the album is still quite enjoyable in spite of that.

All in all, Dante Tomaselli's *Out of Body Experience* is a must for fans of the director/composer's previous work and for anyone looking to take a fond (and sometimes haunting) stroll down memory lane. The album plays like a welcome array of blasts from the past for children of the '80s. For me, it recalls memories of everything from *Knight Rider* to *The Atari 2600* and Joe Dante's criminally under-appreciated sci-fi film, *Explorers*.

