

Hypnagogue
<https://hypnagogue.net/2015/01/06/drachemusik-onewayness-immeasurable/>
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Immeasurable

Buddhist thought gets an electro-acoustic soundtrack on Immeasurable, the recent collaboration between dRachEmUsiK & Onewayness (Charles Shriner and Adam Holquist). Kicking off (a little abruptly) with a rich, throaty drone on the shruti box and lacing in guitar, Immeasurable sets its base and then melts into a sonically guided meditation that eases between cool beats and long drifts. Shriner opens the proceedings with a recitation on Mettā, advising on how to radiate “Loving Kindness” (the title, as well as the concept) in six directions. Chimes ring, drones rise, and this rhythmic track unfolds. It’s the most openly dynamic piece, a hit of energy before things hush down a bit. You are allowed to groove a while prior to meditation, it seems—and gladly so.

Immeasurable’s tracks grow progressively longer, ranging from just short of 9 minutes to just over 15. All in all, it’s just 46 minutes total, but what a very deep 46 minutes it is, and with a whole lot to listen to. Analog synths add crackling, popping textures to the flows. It’s especially effective in my favorite track, “Joy,” where it’s kicked up with just the right amount of dubby echo to give it an irresistible rhythmic groove. Anchored with a thick bass drone, this track will take you elsewhere for a little while. There’s some sort of manipulated vocal drop in there as well, a repeating guttural exhalation, that manages to up the cool factor by another notch.

“Compassion” stretches out lazily, its long drone base supporting a drawn-out melody on strings (or perhaps manipulated piano) flecked with analog twitterings. A real brain-massager. Speaking of which, in listening to this release I have often found myself suddenly becoming aware that I am somewhere in the midst of the soft, breathy drones of the final track, “Equanimity,” with no recollection of how I got there.

Shriner and Holquist stretch this one out into a classic ambient style, a quiet tide of rise-and-fall in a slow-motion dynamic. This is Immeasurable at its deepest, and it’s lush and gorgeous. As it draws to the end, the shruti-box drone rises out of the mist, returning to close the circle. A very nice touch that helps define this as a guided meditation of sorts. Shriner’s recitation from a Buddhist prayer brings you back around for the final moments.

I was surprised, but only slightly, to notice at one point that I had listened to Immeasurable more than 30 times. Time flies when you’re being brought deep inside your head, it seems. Each trip into this release has been excellent. The balance between beats and drifts is absolutely perfect. There is a ton of small detail work at play, which I love, giving the attentive listener something to really dig into. This is certainly something you’ll want to loop. It just keeps getting better. Do not miss this release.
Available at Bandcamp.