



Press release

“After the renewed racial tension in the USA, music became our solace”

With their new EP, the Danish-American duo “Gate to Venus” has created a musical rebellion against the systemic racism that both singers have experienced themselves.

"The assassinations of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain and countless others were not really unheard of - racism has always been an ingrained part of American society, but all of the sudden people just became aware of it more here in Europe," said Gabriel Gordon, of the band Gate to Venus. He grew up in California with a white mother, a black father, and a community that always had prejudices about him because of his skin color.

"Of course, there were also some positive prejudices that I was good at playing basketball (I wasn't) and playing music but at the same time always a presumption that I would steal in stores or was threatening in some other way," says Gabriel Gordon. Cecilie Beck, the other half of the duo, is Danish, but has also experienced racism up close. Especially when she lived in New York and was in a relationship with an African-American man. *"He was often stopped and searched by the police when he walked alone on the street, but if he walked with me, they left him alone,"* says Cecilie Beck.

Cecilie Beck and Gabriel Gordon both lived in Berlin when the news of George Floyd's assassination sparked protests around the world. *"It quickly became clear to us that we needed to transform the pain this caused into music. Songwriting was our way of processing the repeated grief. And in many ways, we are actually speaking to ourselves in the lyrics - to remind ourselves that we need to wake up, and fight oppression and racism whenever and wherever we encounter it. Because even though racism is even more pronounced in the USA, it is certainly also a part of our everyday life and our entire social structure here in Denmark, and in every other part of the world",* states the band. They are now based in Denmark.

The EP ***Solanum*** is a commentary on - and reflection on - the ingrained structure of racism in American society. *Solanum* is the Latin term for plants that grow at night. The songs on the EP are about how some forces are amplified in the dark - how challenges and hardship can make one flourish.

The first song on ***Solanum***, "***Night Blossoms***" is a song about hope and about maintaining faith in oneself in adversity. The percussion sometimes sounds like a kind of second hand on a clock and symbolizes history stagnating, cycling back and repeating itself. It is a song that aims to motivate people to push against the herd mentality. It also encourages the listener to focus on the positive things that are going on around one's self. Clarity can dispel the negative. The lyrics use metaphors from the sea, which symbolize emotion and feelings. The beat consists of a funky R&B rhythm and the rebellious guitar counteracts this current and gives the song a rock feel. A music video for this song will be released on September 22nd along with the EP. Gordon takes the microphone as lead singer in "***Night Blossoms***", and Beck's airy high notes substantiate a sensitivity in combination with Gordon's raw rock vocals.

"The Mirror"

Beck leads the song with her vocals, and this time Gordon backs *her* up. This song is about awareness. If you stand face to face with yourself in the mirror of a lake, you see your own reflection. If you get closer and closer, you will eventually be dissolved by yourself and confront your own reality. "***The Mirror***" is about not running from our problems, but instead, confronting them. The outro draws on Gordon's African-American as well as Native American roots with a rhythmic choral anthem, as a form of healing ritual. "***The Mirror***" is a singer/songwriter ballad.

"Turning Tides" borrows quotes from leaders in the fight against racism, such as Frederick Douglas, Martin Luther King Junior, Audre Lorde and Maya Angelou. This song is a direct commentary on the social upheaval that took place in the spring and summer of 2020 and still continues. *Turning Tides* is a protest song which, with the lyrics "*speaking up*" and "*rise up*", will motivate the listener to participate actively in the debate on racial equality. Perhaps it will make the listener reflect on whether s/he unconsciously participates in certain oppressive patterns in society.

Gate to Venus consists of Cecilie Beck (Denmark) & Gabriel Gordon (USA), and the songs on ***Solanum*** were written throughout the summer of 2020. They are in the process of recording their 2nd LP - ***Third Eye View***, which is scheduled to be released on December 21, 2020.

On March 20, 2020, the duo released their first project, the double LP ***Chrysalis Metropolis***.

Written by Mira Kellermann and Sound Vision Lab, Inc.

Band: Gate to Venus - Cecilie Beck (DK), Gabriel Gordon (USA)

Release: EP ***Solanum***

Release Date: September 22, 2020

Song sequence: "***Night Blossoms***", "***The Mirror***", "***Turning Tides***"

Genre: pop / rock / singer-songwriter / experimental folk

Credits: Cecilie Beck (producer, piano, vocals, beats, songwriter), Gabriel Gordon

Website: www.gate2venus

Instagram and facebook: @gate2venus

