

Diagrams

*Chromatics* new album released **19th January 2015** on **Full Time Hobby**

*"ecstatic melodies and brilliantly imaginative arrangements mark Genders out as premier-league pop adventurer"* Time Out

When songwriter and producer Sam Genders last donned his Diagrams hat, captive listeners found themselves truly stunned by the Streatham Hill artist’s imaginative and inventive arrangements that made up 2012's debut album *Black Light*. Having now upped sticks from his London lodgings and settled in Sheffield with a new lease of life and wife, fresh pastures and friendships are what form the heart of Diagrams’ brand new album *Chromatics.*

*“Relationships are a constant thread. In all their frustrating, exciting, mundane, beautiful, wonderful, sexy, scary glory,”* reveals Genders of the album’s themes. “*And there's lots of hope in the songs. They shouldn't be taken too literally mind you... in my head Chromatics is life in Technicolor; with all its ups and downs.”*

Equally drawing inspiration from the writing on relationships by David Schnarch, Ester Perel and the book *Division Street* by Sheffield poet Helen Mort, whilst spending time in his own home studio for the first time, it’s without doubt that the Steel city provided the ideal backdrop for Genders to write whenever the inspiration came and, essentially, whittle down the fifty or so tracks he had recorded as part of the album’s creation. *“There are woods over the road and a little garden out the back with a greenhouse, shed, and flower beds.* *Being in a new place has brought something special to the process. Sheffield is a very open and direct place and I'd say the songs are more that way too.”*

Whilst *Black Light* fizzed with electronic effects, synth-bass, programmed beats and low-key funk grooves that brought about comparisons to the leftfield pop of Arthur Russell, Metronomy, Steve Mason and Hot Chip, it’s without doubt that Genders’ next offering falls closer to home comforts and marks the next step in Genders’ renaissance. Take lead track ‘Phantom Power’; it’s the track which truly sums up what it’s like to find yourself forever reassessing. *“It's about feeling like you're losing a grip on your sanity at one moment, then feeling inspired and up for anything the next.* *Or frustration with yourself yet believing that it's possible to sort yourself out,”* explains Genders. Elsewhere ‘You Can Talk To Me’s delicate rolling melody and ‘Serpent’ once again showcase the playful, eclectic slant to Genders’ songwriting prowess alongside an innate sense of crisp production and programming techniques.

Never one to shirk away from those around him, Genders would be the first to call Diagrams, and particularly *Chromatics,* a collaborative process. Once again featuring a rolling cast of inspirational musicians the album includes vocals from, amongst friends and family members, The Smoke Fairies whilst the skilled brass and string arrangements come courtesy of Danyal Dhondy and Sam Ewens. ‘London’s greatest’ drummers Karl Penney, and Cacophony drummer Fletcher Adams provide the beats whilst live band members Emma Black and Ben Malitskie lend their expertise of Baritone Saxophone and Viola. ‘Brain’ meanwhile, was co-written with long-time friend and collaborator Matt McKenzie and features an in utero recording of his son James' heartbeat.

Yet it’s the partnership with producer Leo Abrahams (Wild Beasts, David Byrne, Brian Eno, Jon Hopkins, Ed Harcourt, Marianne Faithful et al) that has truly brought Diagrams to life. After a long search, Abrahams was picked to piece all parts together and as a result Genders found himself writing songs that worked across a variety of production styles. *“Leo’s incredibly good at what he does and virtually all the impressive production and soundscaping is down to him. He’s also an amazing guitarist and played some of my favourite guitar moments on the album.”*

Who knows exactly what kind of relationships will inspire Genders next? Currently finding himself midst China’s south central city of Changsha in Hunan as a *Musician in Residence* on behalf of the British Council and PRS foundation, life for Genders right now is all about new experiences, meeting new faces and learning from new friendships. *“It feels like anything could happen from one day to the next. I'd like to record a Chinese version of ‘Phantom Power’ so that once I'm back in the UK I can reconnect with the music lovers I've met. I've heard lots of very poppy pop songs that incorporate both Chinese and English lyrics so I'd like to try my own twist on that.”*

Live dates – 16th October 2014 The Purcell Rooms, Southbank Centre, London (FTH 10th Anniversary)

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