



LYDIA LUNCH SMOKE IN THE SHADOWS

ALBUM ATAVISTIC, BREAKIN' BEATS **RELEASE:** NOVEMBER, 2004
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Lydia Lunch has over 25 years of activity as subversive chanteuse and polemical provocateur behind her. Where most people may find it difficult to keep the rage up for that long, Lunch seems to have a never-ceasing capacity to fan the flame of frustration, which her recent live performances as well as new album “Smoke in the Shadows” are able proofs of.

Just like her last studio album “Widowspeak”, “Smoke in the Shadows” is dominated by a hazy jazz noir soundscape. But unlike its predecessor, it mainly eschews spoken word in favour of more song centered tracks. It works wonderfully, with Lunch’s vitriolic yet darkly humorous tales from the darker side of town (and the mind) becoming even more engaging in this strangely seductive setting.

The backing band may shift from track to track, but the music definitely works as a whole, with the impressive bass playing and the wild splashes of brass being definite highlights. Lunch’s singing voice also sounds better than it probably ever has, ranging from veiled desperation to a bluesy drawl that suits the music and her lyrics perfectly.

“Smoke in the Shadows” took its time to really grow on me, but give it that and you’ll discover that it hasn’t got one obsolete second, making it one of the best albums of the year as well as another impressive entry in Lydia Lunch’s long list of releases.

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