

23-SCRITTI POLITTI'S ASYLUMS IN JERUSALEM
/ JACQUES DERRIDA DOUBLE A-SIDE 12" SINGLE SLEEVE



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A strange coincidence of two developments during the 1980s has been on my mind lately. Neither development was a trend, exactly. But both have had after-effects of deep import to this day. There was one instance where they encountered each other: the release of the single usually referred to as Asylums in Jerusalem by the band Scritti Politi. In fact it was issued as a double A-side, and on the reverse was a song called Jacques Derrida. [...]

Ultimately, after 1980, among the youthful generation that had first been moved by punk, a movement began that raised seduction, physical decadence, longing and melancholy to positive virtues, that no longer claimed to be original or working from human nature, but rather affirmed the constructed and quoted nature of our "own" feelings and songs, that affirmed artificiality and the pose, and didn't try to drown out or shut down the status quo, but rather tried to slip through its cracks: I'm thinking of Orange Juice, The Monochrome Set, Josef K, The Teardrop Explodes, Culture Club, Dexy's Midnight Runners, ABC, Felt, and, of course, Scritti Politi. Many others have been forgotten. [...]

One could also find an affinity through the novels of Camus, Kerouac, Hesse, Sartre, and Genet. Which brings me to the second striking development I mentioned above. For in this area, too, an important new movement of the early 1980s became manifest. The romanciers of the present, the authors whose books as much portrayed the world as questioned it, who with their subtleties and overheated texts could flatter the youth as well as move the ground beneath their feet, were now Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Jean Francois Lyotard. They were academics, scholars, philosophers by trade, and yet they were read and memorized with the same excited and impatient rapture, and used and misused for personal life choices and values, as Salinger or Goethe's Werther before them. [...]

But the teenagers who discovered soul music back then and schlepped around bad translations from the French in their jacket pocket to read on the subway never again invested so much emotional intensity in such difficult theoretical texts. [...] "Theory" and this new, reference-laden pop music were models for Gesamtkunstwerk-like access to the world, and yet at the same time they were minor songs with minor texts, minor books with just one or two quickly communicable basic tenets, a constellation which culminated in Green Gartside of Scritti Politi singing I'm in love with Jacques Derrida...

– "AA Philosophy," Diedrich Diederichsen, Dot Dot Dot 48, 2004

Scritti Politi's Asylums in Jerusalem / Jacques
Derrida double A-side 12" single sleeve, 1983,
32.5 x 32.5 cm