



On *Hot Dreams*, the third studio album for **Arts & Crafts**, **Timber Timbre** daubs vibrant colour across the restless evolution of its earthy, angular palette.

Taylor Kirk's singular intonation, quavered in slow, low register, combines in haunting resonance with collaborator/bandmate Simon Trottier's stark yet lavish arrangements. Normalized is the bedrock of folksy and fifties Timber Timbre, now cached in smoothed, viscous tonality: new sonic admissions, ringing sensuality and caprice, neon and haze.

On the title single, "**Hot Dreams**", seductive guitars chime melancholy and petulance, articulating the enigmatic Kirk in his most languid voice. Guest **Colin Stetson** envelops the backing vocals of **Romy Lightman** (Tasseomancy) in timeless cycles of intoxicating velvet saxophone. The consonance of **Mika Posen**'s strings mingles with vintage contributions from **Olivier Fairfield** on Fender Rhodes and **Mathieu Charbonneau** on Mellotron – pivotal players in Timber Timbre's lineage returning to add multiple instruments to *Hot Dreams*' balmy clime.

On the acclaimed *Creep On Creepin' On* (2011) – nominated for two JUNO Awards and the Polaris Music Prize Short List – Kirk and Trottier transmuted the hollow grey tones of *Timber Timbre* (2009) into plaintive doo-wop through oblique, concrete passages.

With *Hot Dreams*, Timber Timbre transposes new definitions of historic ambience, unabashedly weaving unity between disparate environments. "Bring Me Simple Men" is among Kirk's most cinematic work, connecting trembling western to plodding horror with the pomp of Hollywood phantasm.

"Grand Canyon" finds the band locked in that impenetrable gorge, cascading irreverent melody – conjured from theremin, lapsteel, tubular bells, and baritone guitar – up and out from its echoic walls.

The grooved insistence of "Curtains!?" – words penned with **Simone Schmidt** (Fiver, One Hundred Dollars) – punctuates Timber Timbre's peculiar sound with soft violence and definite metre, suggesting the depth of this taut live four-piece and rigid counterpoint to the fluidity of *Hot Dreams*.

Culled from ideas born during a stint Kirk spent in Laurel Canyon, *Hot Dreams* coalesced throughout 2013 with Trottier joining Kirk as composer and producer. The pair arranged the new material at **The Banff Centre**, a multidisciplinary arts compound nestled in the Canadian Rockies, later adding an array of classic synthesizers from Calgary's **National Music Centre**. The record was engineered by Graham Lessard at The Banff Centre and Thee Mighty Hotel 2 Tango in Montreal; and mixed by Mark Lawson.

Hot Dreams is Timber Timbre's most fully realized album in a sinuous and infinitely rewarding catalogue of imagistic work. The thoughtful songcraft, Kirk's expressive accent, are intensified by his most affective lyrics to date.

The sardonic mantra of "Run From Me" casts its company off in a dirge disguised as an ode, giving way to the speechless devolution of "The New Tomorrow", as *Hot Dreams* slowly lowers the curtain on a beautifully unsettling scene.

With the residue of its end credits etched on our lids, *Hot Dreams* instills as Timber Timbre's most evocative and focused work to date: so distinctly familiar though it precedes memory, recognizable only as itself, as woodsy evokes the exotic.