

**SOUNDTRACK TO THE FILM  
PIERCING BRIGHTNESS**

(2013) by Shezad Dawood with music by Acid Mothers Temple, Mordant Music, Alexander Tucker & Decomposed Orchestra and Raed Yassin & Omar Dewachi. Sound Design by Tom Drew.

Side A

Track 1.  
01:13 Acid Mothers Temple & The Melting Paraiso  
 U.F.O. 'Nam Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo (Part 1)' (2008)  
 duration 02:51 (original 1:05:15)  
04:21 Mordant Music 'Ghost Ship' (2003)  
 duration 02:17 (Original 09:45)

Track 2.  
00:30 Acid Mothers Temple & The Melting Paraiso  
 U.F.O. 'Interplanetary Love' (2008) duration 03:40  
 (original 05:54 minutes)  
03:41 Acid Mothers Temple & The Melting Paraiso  
 U.F.O. 'Cometary Orbital Drive Suite (A) Light My  
 Fire Ball' (2008) duration 06:32 (original 12:50)  
04:30 Acid Mothers Temple & The Melting Paraiso  
 U.F.O. 'Attack From Planet Hattifatteners' (2008)  
 duration 00:03 (original 03:23)

Duration: 18:29

Side B

Track 1.  
00:08 Alexander Tucker & Decomposed Orchestra,  
 featuring DCW Briggs and Mark Wagner. Recorded  
 live during the filming of Piercing Brightness in  
 2011 duration 04:13 (original 06:19) – Previously  
 unreleased  
04:59 Raed Yassin & Omar Dewachi 'Untitled' (2011)  
 duration 02:09 (original 03:16) – Previously  
 unreleased  
07:05 Mordant Music 'Smasha' (2004) duration 03:44  
 (original 04:45)  
14:05 Acid Mothers Temple & The Melting Paraiso  
 U.F.O. 'Pink Lady Lemonade – You're From Inner  
 Space' (2011) duration 05:06 (original 20:39)

Acid Mothers Temple: All songs written and recorded by Acid Mothers Temple/Kawabata Makoto. Full credits at [www.acidmothers.com](http://www.acidmothers.com)

Alexander Tucker & Decomposed Orchestra: Recorded  
by Ubik Productions.

Mordant Music: 'Smascha' written and recorded by  
Sii, 'Ghost Ship' written and recorded by  
Mordant Music  
Raed Yassin & Omar Dewachi: 'Untitled' written and  
recorded by the artists. Omar Dewachi on Oud.

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Piercing Brightness (2013) is a science fiction film set in Preston, Lancashire directed by visual artist Shezad Dawood. Although the film was commissioned as a public art project<sup>1</sup> its starting point was Shezad's longstanding interest in the music and the approach of Makoto Kawabata and Acid Mothers Temple. *"All of my music is sounds that I hear from the cosmos - I just tune in and reproduce them, like a radio receiver. I don't think about my music. My daily struggle is to become a better, more faithful receiver."*<sup>2</sup> Both artists share this approach of 'receiving' - feeling a place by listening, chatting, recording, reading, replaying, letting the brain put things in and out of order, layering, hiding and making explicit, distorting and laying bare.

Shezad first visited Preston in Autumn 2009. The invitation was initially to spend a couple of days and to have a look round. At this time he had in mind the idea of making a science fiction feature film scored by Acid Mothers Temple, but it was the texture of the city and the various people that he met there that made Preston the place where he decided to develop this film. The city, in the North West of England had been a boomtown during the industrial revolution, centred on the manufacture of textiles. After a long period of decline it is now being 'improved' as the University leads its expansion and regeneration. Shown around by Charles Quick and Elaine Speight, who have been commissioning art projects there since 2006, Shezad was introduced to Preston's special character; its magical mundane, its eccentric core and its notable facts. He discovered that the first Mormon baptisms outside the USA took place in the River Ribble in Preston and that Preston has the fastest growing mainland Chinese population in the UK. He came across the Lancashire Anomalous Phenomena Investigation Society and attended meetings where they applied scientific method to recent UFO sightings. *And* by invitation from Charles, met Mathew Graham Gregory, a Fine Art lecturer at the University, who had recently completed a PhD on experimental Japanese music and who connected him with Makoto Kawabata. So there was an element of synchronicity *OR* an element of ... letting yourself adopt a mode in which you allow your environment to develop a project.

So a film script was developed with the city as its main character and its landmarks as its key locations. The film tells the story of two 'Chinese' aliens who are sent on a mission to Preston to retrieve others aliens who have been in the city for millennia. At its core is a dialogue between those who have become assimilated and want to stay and those who are loyal to their homeland - and so the question: What is it to belong? But it is not this story but the film and its soundtrack as a whole that explores this question. It does this through the layering of a conventional narrative played out by professional actors, with shots of the city which confuse the mundane and the transcendent, the use of archival footage of UFO 'sightings' and an extended cast of exotic birds and over 100 local people, who end up 'walking towards the light' in the central municipal park, as the space ship lands on the controversial brutalist structure of the bus station roof.<sup>3</sup>

The film moves back and forth between a linear narrative (read melody) and other types of image, flashbacks and symbols. We are seduced by the photography and story and then arrested by jarring shots, flashes and flashbacks, scratchy images that appear as evidence and documentary footage of the city's real inhabitants. The visual language moves from Coronation Street to experimental film and is unashamed to do so. For the music, existing tracks were written into the script as the first draft was penned by writer and musician, and long-time friend of Shezad's, Kirk Lake. Kirk understood well the intentions of the project and knew the music – so the story and treatment were written with the sound already there; the film being the offspring of the relationship between the two, set and in tune with this particular city. Kirk introduced Mordant Music to the score "whose peculiarly arcane take on contemporary electronic dance music seemed to slip effortlessly into the fractured storytelling". And then we needed someone to play The Band who appear at a critical half-way point in the narrative. In the film a leading character has an epiphany on hearing a band playing an eerie

and discordant sound. A few weeks before filming I was at a picnic, writing a text message to a more musically minded friend describing a sound that I needed "...psychedelic, droney, discordant..." As I wrote the text I slowly panned up to see Alexander Tucker sitting opposite me, whose music I knew and found I was describing. Accepting the invitation Alexander Tucker & Decomposed Orchestra play 'The Band' in the film and at 2am one Wednesday morning in August 2011 we recorded their track in the disused social club of the Old Post Office in the centre of Preston. Against filmmaking protocol Shezad and I made sure that the music led this part of the shoot and let the band play and the actor re-act until the music was right. And finally Raed Yassin & Omar Dewachi joined the score during the editing phase. Replacing the planned Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Raed and Omar's track gave the scene the traditional Eastern sound originally needed, but brought a discordant quality which worked better still with the scene. The sound was designed by Tom Drew and the 78 minute feature film was completed in 2013. It begged to exist on its own and so we present this record. Alongside it a mix by Radioactive Man/Keith Tenniswood is available as a separate 12" single. This one didn't beg, but just seemed ridiculously right.

Thank you to the artists Makoto Kawabata, Baron Mordant, Alexander Tucker and Raed Yassin for their generosity with the project and for trusting us to re-mix their music, to Kirk Lake, Mathew Graham Gregory and Marcus Thorne for their help along the way and to Tom Drew and Keith Tenniswood for the sound design on the album and the single mixes, respectively.

Kate Parker, November, 2013

Kate Parker produced the film *Piercing Brightness* and has produced this soundtrack through City Projects, London.  
[www.cityprojects.org](http://www.cityprojects.org)

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- 1 Shezad was invited to Preston by In Certain Places, a partnership between the University of Central Lancashire and the Harris Museum set up by Charles Quick, which commissions artists to make works in response to the city.
- 2 Makoto Kawabata interviewed by Luke Buckman, Pitchfork, 01 January 2002 available at <http://pitchfork.com/features/interviews/5839-acid-mothers-temple/>.
- 3 Over the last ten years the bus station has been at the centre of a debate, with the City Council opting for it to be demolished to make way for a new shopping centre with John Lewis as the "anchor brand" and others campaigning for it to be protected for its architectural importance. In 2013 the building was given a Grade II listing.
- 4 Kirk Lake, September 2013.

A DVD/Blu Ray of the film *Piercing Brightness* includes excerpts of Acid Mothers Temple playing live to a special 40 minute cut at Abandon Normal Devices festival (Liverpool, 2011) and is available from Soda Pictures.

Stills from Piercing Brightness (2013) featuring (from top to bottom) Jennifer Lim; 'Halo', a sculpture by John Kennedy; and Landlab (2007); Chen Ko; Houda Echouafni (also on centre label); Will Matthews; Derek Siow; Samantha Edwards; Acid Mothers Temple (live at Abandon Normal Devices Festival, Liverpool, 2001); Paul Leonard; Tracy Brabin; Bhaskar Patel; Alexander Tucker & Decomposed Orchestra as 'The Band' and Helen Baker.' Photography: Bartłomiej Śienkiewicz except owl image: Tim Siddell and centre label image: Richard Harrowing. Other images courtesy of NASA/ JPL-Caltech. Design: Paul Abbott.

