



2 Hans-A-Plast

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CD / LP / digital



The story so far: in the late 1970s, a new four-piece band call themselves Hans-A-Plast, named after a self-adhesive plaster with a non-stick wound pad. The group's ranks are soon bolstered by a fifth Beatle — or should we say a fifth plaster — Annette, allowing drummer Bettina to focus exclusively on her drum kit. »None of the new bands can match Annette for sheer energy, she can sing you into submission,« Alfred Hilsberg announces in Sounds magazine. The band go on to win the newcomers of the year poll, as voted by the music paper's readers. They play gigs when and where they can get them: an anti-fascist festival in Berlin, the Wuppertaler venue Börse, the »Into The Future« festival in Hamburg. Before long they are ready to record a baker's dozen of songs in their home town of Hanover. It takes them less than a week, including the mix. When the music industry come calling, Hans-A-Plast keep them at bay with outrageous demands. The eponymous debut album features cover art by cartoonist Uli Stein and is released in true DIY fashion on »No Fun«, the label founded by the band for this very purpose. A thousand copies would see them break even, but before the new decade begins, they sell ten times that amount. The 2nd No Fun Festival attracts a crowd of 2,000. Things are happening so fast. A legendary gig is recorded for a Rockpalast television broadcast in 1980. » Rockpalast a guest of Hans-A-Plast,« the young punk singer shouts into the microphone to open the show.

»We always seemed to be in a hurry,« she whispers into the phone when I ask her about her old band's second album. They were constantly producing new material, for pragmatic reasons as much as anything else. The concerts got longer. Live shows were always more important to them than the discs, Annette says.

While tens of thousands still revel in the sound of the debut album, Hans-A-Plast have already left their 1-2-3-4 punk days behind them. The band undergoes a veritable metamorphosis. Annette throws herself wholeheartedly into her role as lyricist, finding inspiration in the likes of Sex Gang Children and hanging out in the Rote Kuh bar frequented by British soldiers stationed in Hanover — one of whom, Chas Briggs, designs the back cover of the new LP. Recorded in November 1980 at the Toncooperative studio in Hanover (like its predecessor), the second album virtually explodes with instrumental urgency: its dissonant guitars and increasingly avant-garde arrangements are reminiscent of the New York no wave scene. A singular nervous tremor is suddenly interrupted before everything rushes ahead again, left, right, radical rhythm shifts, bass drum quarter beats encircle atonal saxophone, nursery rhymes are fed through the meat grinder ... this hectic pace is reflected in Annette's vocal melodies, alternating between a choirgirl and a caw, whooping, almost yodelling, enthusiastically singing of self-immolation or murder threats on (long since expired) actors. Drummer Bettina knits assiduously in the gaps between recording, so it's apt that the cover of the new LP (released in 1981) features a clothing pattern. By the time the next »No Fun« tour comes around in June, Bettina is five months pregnant. The band take a break as Bettina and Micha become parents and Annette goes back to England, where she takes two A-Levels. She might still sing about *Tütchenkleben* but she no longer needs to pack parcels. The Hans-A-Plast royalties are enough to live on.

– Max »Drangsal« Gruber

Tracklist

01. Spielfilm
02. Reicher Vati
03. Kunde und Vieh
04. Dicke Kinder
05. Sicherheit
06. Machtspiel / Eidexe Kriech
07. Humphrey Bogart
08. Kurz und Dreckig
09. Tuaregs
10. Ich zünd mich an
11. Mono-Ton

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