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## Atom™, “R-N140 Winterreise”

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By [Steve Dewhurst](#)



Uwe Schmidt’s new release for Raster-Noton flips from tinkling piano tumbles to the kind of ear piercing glitch most often associated with the label, and sometimes combines the two in uneasy passages of creeping uncertainty.

By changing pseudonyms on such a regular basis, Schmidt has enabled himself to explore a variety of musical rivulets with great success. From Señor Coconut to Atom Heart and fifty or so others too (Weird Shit, anyone? Pentatonic Surprise?), his creative soul is a restless and endlessly fascinating one. For *Winterreise*, recorded under his now established Atom™ moniker, Schmidt has gone all-in. Made up of seventeen tracks, the longer swathes interspersed with brief passages of barely-there connective strands, the album is a triumph of atmospheric cultivation in a field that falls into unfeeling frigidity all too often. The loping title track passes easily into ‘Voralpenthema’, a dripping piano miniature, and so on into the crackling ‘Streuung Teil’ trilogy which comprises three tracks of slowly oscillating hitchbeats. Motifs come and go, like in ‘Drei Schneewalzer-Teil II’ which harks back to ‘Voralpenthema’ and predicts its sister track thirteen pieces in. At its most industrial, *Winterreise* is as complex as anything else on Raster-Noton but it tempers the urge to stretch on or over-layer and settles instead. When ‘Streuung Teil IV’ hisses and pings its way into ‘Ein Winterabend In Der Bowman Suite’ it does so on a gradually emerging bed of stately strings and by the time ‘Tiefebene’ comes around the sound has relaxed so far as to be positively subterranean. For a shade over seven minutes ‘Tiefebene’ rumbles slowly, sending out infrasonic pulses.

The range showcased on *Winterreise* is enormous and at just under an hour long it might appear daunting. It’s to Uwe Schmidt’s credit that he handles it all so well; in lesser hands it could have dragged or become an overbearing mess. When the album eases out of the dubby ‘Gauß’sche Landaufnahme-Teil III’ and into a familiar piano epilogue it comes full circle and does so with consummate grace and composure.

[Raster-Noton](#)