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For Immediate Release:

Taffety Punk Theatre Company Releases Game-Changing Beauty Pill Album, Ten Years Later

The never-before-released soundtrack to a controversial 2010 play reveals a pivotal moment for the band.

Band: Beauty Pill
Album: Sorry You're Here (LP/digital release)
Label: Taffety Punk Theatre Company
Release: February 21, 2020
Price: \$20 for vinyl, \$12 for download-only.
Go to www.taffetypunk.com for purchase info.

Taffety Punk unveils **Beauty Pill's** great aesthetic turning point with the official release of *Sorry You're Here*, the band's haunting and hard-to-find score for the theatre company's original dance play *suicide.chat.room*. The first scoring project for Beauty Pill, this historically significant album finally comes to light after ten years.

Chad Clark, founder and leader of the band, had just defeated death when Taffety Punk Artistic Director **Marcus Kyd** approached him about composing a score for a dance play. Clark's battle with cardiomyopathy (a heart-invading virus) has been well chronicled, but his recovery is notable as the point from which this collaboration was launched.

The play did not yet exist. Taffety Punk's goal, as ever, was to bring musicians, actors, and dancers into the same space and build a show from scratch. The source material for this project was to be taken directly from Internet groups devoted to suicide. The song titles offer a glimpse into the poignant text from these sources. What struck Clark above all was the warm, if heartbreaking, greeting the participants in these forums offered to newcomers: "**Welcome. Sorry You're Here.**"

As the play was created, Clark would arrive at rehearsal and observe the actors and dancers. He wore headphones and keyed his way through sonic experiments. He would then work at home and with his bandmates to refine these mini compositions. The flow of the music often responded to choreographer **Paulina Guerrero's** work. Clark says, "The sensation I wanted to evoke from Guerrero's convulsive choreography was the feeling of entropy, instability—the constantly-falling-apart, vertiginous melee of anonymous online discussion. Nothing is stable, there's no way to know what is real, who is real, what you should believe. There is no known."

Clark was also inspired by the play's nexus of technology, human pathos, and bricolage to experiment with electronic music and orchestration. This experimentation took the band far afield from the guitar-bass-drums world of DC punk. Clark describes one of these experiments saying: "I did all sorts of things to achieve that 'falling apart' effect. For the piece called 'At A Loss,' I recorded myself playing improvised jazz chords on a piano. I recorded on a quarter-inch analog reel-to-reel tape. I then manipulated the tape with my fingers so that it sounds like it's always slowing down and dragging and warping."

The theatre company did not hear most of the work during the composition phase, trusting that all the components (text, dance, and music) would coalesce gracefully when the time came. And coalesce they did. An unquestionably daring performance, in a city that prides itself on a wealth of theatre companies, the show was met with high praise. DC Theatre Scene proclaimed the music "fabulous" and "inspired," and went on to say the show was "unquestionably one of the most successful efforts . . . to put dance at the service of the story."

Sorry You're Here can be seen as Beauty Pill's marriage of high art and pop sensibility. Since the creation of this seminal work in 2010, the band has continued to push the boundaries of what their founder imagined for them. When asked to create a sound installation at the Artisphere in Arlington, VA, Clark seized the opportunity to make his own band the exhibit. They recorded the entirety of *Beauty Pill Describes Things as They Are* at the Artisphere in full view of the public. When playing shows to support that album, the band opted for a performative twist on the normal concert experience by having the musicians surround the audience. *Describes Things* was released to rave reviews across the music world, hailed by TIME magazine as best of the decade and by NPR, Rolling Stone, and New York Times as best of the year. While Beauty Pill continues to compose highly stylized and genre-bending songs, the band finds itself being commissioned for more and more scoring projects: notably a recent project for HBO, soundscapes for NPR, and a play at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in Washington, DC.

Describes Things is widely considered a watershed work in Beauty Pill's canon, but the experimentation in *Sorry You're Here* laid the foundation for this artistic thrust out of the ordinary indie-rock confines.

So what took so long to make this album? Kyd always felt the score deserved to be released as an album, but Clark was not sure. He says, "For many years—ten, to be exact—I was reluctant to release it as an album because I felt it was purpose-built for the play." The occasion of the 2020 remounting of the play and the very positive reception to *Describes Things As They Are* encouraged Clark to reconsider. Kyd, director and creator of the show, celebrates this dual opportunity to release the album properly in conjunction with a ten-year anniversary performance. He says, "This show was an important turning point for us, too. We are thrilled at this chance to release these songs. We love this music."

The official release date of *Sorry You're Here* is **February 21, 2020**. Pre-orders are now available now at Taffety Punk Theatre Company's website: www.taffetypunk.com.

For hi-res photos, go to: www.taffetypunk.com/press

Beauty Pill is a wonderfully difficult-to-categorize band founded by Chad Clark. The band's origins trace back to the mid 90's variegated but solidly guitar-bass-drums driven DC punk scene. Beauty Pill's mercurial nature was a built-in feature right from the start, allowing Clark to call on musicians beyond his immediate bandmates for sonic contributions where needed. After several records and tours, the band began decentralizing guitar in their music, principally because that's what the songs wanted. But for Chad Clark, this shift was also a deliberate way to distance himself from "rock dude culture." At that time, as Clark remembers, "indie-rock dude culture was pervasive, largely male and largely white, parochial and anhedonic." The band continued experimenting, but took a long hiatus in 2008 and 2009 when Clark was diagnosed with cardiomyopathy. During his recovery, Marcus Kyd approached him about making the music for *suicide.chat.room*, the music that is featured on this album, *Sorry You're Here*. The creation of this music, for a very different purpose than the band was used to playing, paved the way for the band, and for Clark in particular, to further question everything about the music they made, and how they made it, and how they performed it. In addition to their highly praised 2015 album *Beauty Pill Describes Things as They Are*, the band now regularly composes scores for theatre projects and films and other media. True to their initial instincts, the ground continues to shift beneath them: they sometimes perform as a duet, or a trio, or sometimes the full band performs with their adjunct wind ensemble. Beauty Pill is currently finishing preparation on an even newer album, which will be released this spring on Arto Lindsay's imprint, Northern Spy Records.

Taffety Punk Theatre Company is the resident company at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop in Washington, DC. Taffety Punk's mission is to maintain a dynamic ensemble of actors, dancers, and musicians who ignite a public passion for theatre by making the classical and the contemporary exciting, meaningful, and affordable. The company won the very first John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company at the Helen Hayes Awards. More recently, the company received two Helen Hayes nominations for original choreography in both *Phaeton* and *An Iliad*.

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