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## VERT - *some beans and an octopus* Sonig Records, October 2006

Raise the curtains: Ladies and gentlemen, what a find! And what a change! VERT, aka Adam Butler, Brit in exile and Cologne resident by choice, has been a reliable entity when it comes to multilayered electronica, rich instrumental arrangements and delightful experimentation. Three years have now gone by since the release of his last album, *small pieces loosely joined*. During this time Vert played various festivals, founded a new live project with DJ Elephant Power and the bass player Fedor Ruskuc, and above all, spent much time producing. He's never been predictable, but no one thought he would reinvent himself so completely with *some beans and an octopus*. You could blame it on the break-in into Butler's studio two years ago when all of his equipment, including computer back-ups, were stolen. Vert simply had to start all over again and he used this producer's nightmare to his advantage.

Recent music history holds quite a few examples of tepid pop efforts by musicians with an experimental background. How wonderfully successful it has turned out for Vert, however, who remains very conscious of his own musical origins. This man isn't breaking any new boundaries, but producing a kind of music that already had its inherent roots in his previous work. Butler's use of piano as the main instrument, complex grooves, strange sounds and unpredictable changes, are all still there. However, some significant elements have been added, most obvious are the vocals. Almost every track on *some beans...* features vocals; and it is Adam who sings like he's never done anything else. His tracks appear taut and compact, as if clear structures emerged by themselves out of the vocals with sometimes quirky, clever or poetic lyrics.

On *some beans...* Adam Butler decidedly stands by his great love, Ragtime. He doesn't use it affectedly, but to simply mix it with hip-hop, Grime and many other musical styles. Everything on this album fits in so naturally that the different styles flash through only briefly, like a quick wink from an old passing acquaintance. There is the odd piano bar rag that mutates into a club hit, and vice versa. But above all, despite all this diversity within these ideas and references, Vert still remains very clear. The fact that he doesn't seek refuge in the vague and blurry while still managing to say all he wants to say is quite an achievement. Instead he delivers a great performance in which bizarre episodes condense into glamorous songs.

*some beans...* is great fun because it is so laid-back while being competent, sophisticated and sexy. When we talked about Vert's last LP release we praised the end of separation between acoustic and electronic production methods. When we listen to *some beans and an octopus* this rather sounds like a statement from a previous era. We praise the delightful merger of cabaret, experimental, hip-hop and club Adam Butler manages so organically. He has written wonderfully catchy, funny and exciting songs, and they raise their heads high above all this talk about pop music with experimental influence. They are simply musical fireworks which sparkle and bedazzle, and you wouldn't want to miss a second.

"Tweaked rhythms, stretched loops and slowly mounting melodic patters ensure that the follow-up to Adam "Vert" Butler's previous excursions, such as *Köln Concert* and *9 Types of Ambiguity* continues to twist and twitch with inventiveness. . . Tough-minded as always, Vert dives into music's dark attics and corners, coming back with the most surprising things."-- *THE WIRE*

"...*Nine Types of Ambiguity* reveals Vert as a rhythm-driven sound obsessive with a melodic heart... a diverse album loaded with imagination."-- *All Music Guide*

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