

Troller

Reemerging from a long and self-defining stint in the studio, Austin's darkwave metal trio Troller returns with their pleasurable harsh second LP, *Graphic*. Despite the underground success of the critically acclaimed 2012 self-titled debut, *Graphic* manages to eclipse the broad appeal of the first record's addictively ominous pop anthems. Troller's focus on layered composition and biting sound design has resulted in a highly developed work that embodies the band's unique raw form while raising the benchmark on fidelity and experimentation. *Graphic* arrives perfectly unhinged and hideously sophisticated, reinterpreting familiar elements from their debut LP, and propelling the trio's provocative sensibilities explicitly further.

Troller formed in 2010 out of Austin's dense electronic and experimental scene and played a key role in the founding of Holodeck Records. The trio's synthesizer and drum machine half-time rhythms impeccably complement bassist and vocalist Amber Goers' heavy riffing and charismatically tortured voice. From the onset, Troller's compelling live performances immediately distinguished them as a promising up-and-coming project yet to reach its peak. After touring extensively and selling out of multiple pressings of LPs, CDs and cassettes of the self-titled, Troller wholly poured themselves into studio sessions for *Graphic*, crafting a professional and fully realized final piece.

Aspects of *Graphic* are often alien and cold, most notably epitomized by the atonal chord progressions and walls of impenetrable feedback on the album's title track and the song "Sundowner." Although "Storm Maker" soothes the emotional palette with its soft tones and bittersweet melodies, the natural tension of Goers' captivating vocal delivery is never completely forgiving. This internal duality is a recurring trope throughout all ten of *Graphic's* gorgeously dark tracks, unapologetically oscillating between irresistible hooks and unmitigated chaos. Troller's guttural bass tones, warm synthesizer arpeggios, and booming sub hits are catchy yet gritty, asserting a balanced and individual take on modern synth pop. Haunting and loosely structured interludes are scattered throughout the track list, making this collection of songs a complete work. *Graphic's* harmony and clarity are in large part due to the amazing work of Holodeck's in-house production master and solo artist Dylan Cameron, who spearheaded the recording process at Stassney Studios in Austin with additional assistance from S U R V - I V E's Michael Stein and Silk Rodeo's Michael McCay.

Graphic is a visceral expression of the beauty within destruction. For those who lauded the first album's cathartic relief and have thirsted for another dose of Troller's anesthetic euphoria: *Graphic* is here.