SHORTENED BIO - SKULLCRUSHER

***And Your Song is Like a Circle***, the second album from New York-based artist **Skullcrusher**, a.k.a. **Helen Ballentine**, winds its way into an everchanging, unstable core. Recorded piecemeal over a period of years following the release of her celebrated 2022 debut, *Quiet the Room*, *And Your Song is Like a Circle* does not capture experience – it gestures toward the imprint of an experience that is uncapturable. Swaying between vaporous folk and crystalline electronics, landing somewhere in the snowfields shared by Grouper and Julia Holter, *Circle*probes the ways that grief turns itself inside out. Loss itself becomes as real and substantial as what's been lost.

Ballentine began writing *Circle* after leaving Los Angeles, a city she’d called home for nearly a decade. She ended up returning upstate to New York’s Hudson Valley, where she was born and raised. Several years of intense isolation followed, and Ballentine immersed herself in films, books, and art that reflected the rupture of relocating cross-country and its dissociative aftershocks.

Throughout the record, the line between human and machine blurs. On "**Maelstrom**," voices crash between echoing drumbeats like water through a cavern. The vocal filigrees on "**Exhale**" fan out into a haze of synthesizers and strings. "**Dragon**" lets piano echo over tight, gritted percussion.

If Skullcrusher’s first album rendered the detailed intimacies of domestic space, *Circle* finds itself vaporized across the landscape: swirling, drifting, searching. It skirts an event horizon in long, slow strokes. These are songs that vibrate with the fervency of an attempt to capture a moment, to draw a circle around it. "I like thinking about my work as a collection," Ballentine says. "Eventually it might form a circle. Each time I make something, I’m putting another line around the body of work. It feels like I’ll be trying to trace it for my whole life."