

Sound manipulation is the foundation of all musical forms. The individual control of audible vibrations is what allows musicians to create aurally aesthetic sounds. As Paul D. Miller (a.k.a DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid) writes, "When Thomas Edison first recorded the human voice onto a tin foil roll singing 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,' on December 6, 1877, history changed. It became malleable in a form never before seen on this planet.

Experiences of events, and the moment-events themselves could be captured, edited, sequenced, and distributed. What Edison did was take the voice and reduce it to its basic component: sound."

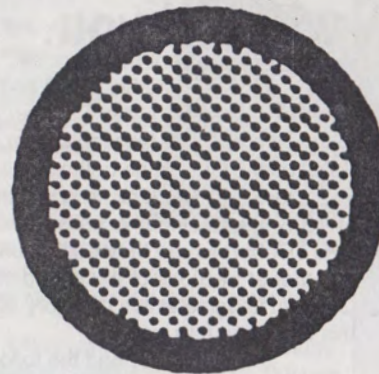
This is what the DJ in hip-hop does when he combines and reanimates bits and pieces of old recorded history to create entirely new compositions. The music represents a future without a past...

(continued inside)

wow&flutter



"Noise is annoying when
you try to ignore it;
fascinating when you
listen to it." - John Cage



contents under pressure:

John Duncan (<i>Amsterdam's noise/art terrorist talks shop</i>)	4
Daniel Menche (<i>The Master of Noise discusses his newest work</i>)	6
Turntablismus (<i>An in depth analysis of the art of DJing in the nine- seven featuring DJ Spooky, DJ Shadow, and Q-bert</i>)	8
RE: views (<i>Tricky</i>)	11

props:

Paul D. Miller, Daniel Menche, John Duncan, Q-bert, Christopher M. Kelly, Charles Powne, Max Springer, Pookie, Patrick Barber, Mark Fischer, Gordon Conrad, Jeff Wagner, Erik Gilbert, Jill Tomlinson, Braden King, Karl Farrow, and even to the nonbelievers... thanks.

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"...and if I had the chance, I'd do it better." -Shorty

all mistakes due to stylistic preference

JOHN DUNCAN will kill you.

John Duncan is a master of minimal soundscapes and harshly intriguing collages of noise. He's been creating sound and art projects for nearly twenty years now (since he was 15, he says), and he's worked with everyone from Chris Keefe to Elliott Sharpe. Some of his projects are painfully beautiful in their simplicity while others border on the absurd in their extremism. They often suggest that, if he thought there was something to be learned from it, he wouldn't have a problem taking your life.

His performance events have included such things as disguising his identity and firing guns point blank at friends (with blanks, of course) to examine their reactions ("Scare"), and being molested by multiple women after exposing them to pornographic films ("For Women Only").

"I was trying to find out more about myself," says Duncan casually. "Scare was done in LA, in response to being attacked on the street. In the span of a split-second, wanted to give opposite senses of total helpless 'cold' fear and reckless 'hot' anger to unsuspecting recipients, people who I knew would be able to appreciate it as a learning experience. *For Women Only* was an attempt to reverse an accepted situation; to arouse an audience of women with erotic images normally targeted for men, and then to give that audience a male (myself) to

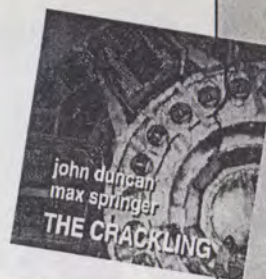


use in private to vent their arousal."

Duncan and his friend and frequent collaborator Max Springer recently released a new CD (available from Soleilmoon Recordings in the U.S.) called *The Crackling*. *The Crackling* was recorded at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (see sidebar) where they bash atoms together at fractions of the speed of light. One can imagine which category of sound this recording falls under...

Max Springer had the following to say about his work with Duncan: "In the membrane separating the sundry and more interesting studies is a great, red lodge. I met John Duncan in a cheap cafe there, or maybe... it was the Melkweg. I was a little upset with how gallery/museum shows of my paintings and sculpture were static. I was sniffing out something that had oscillation. I wanted to have intercourse with another artist that understood painting and sound. Pseudo-friends introduced me to Mr. Duncan... who immediately asked me to go out and physically challenge his audience that night. John's performance was dark. Some young dudes were pounding industrial waste under strobe in black, John shot fog from a fog gun at the audience, and around eight of us pushed and concentrated the audience, to peak claustrophobia and anxiety, to help expand the awareness of the emotions. I liked him. I was delighted to find out he'd worked with McKenzie (of The Halfler Trio), whose recording work always fascinated me. My college studies were devoted to Electronic Music and Music Concrete, so my interest in the challenges of John's work has gone on a while. I'd been using computers for my own work for years, so I got John to look at programming as a natural way to build on his existing, rather severe musical ethics. He has shown me the meaning of the colors of his sounds, which we've now been composing together into various audio and multimedia projects. John's added a lot to my love of tone poetry. When we work together... it feels like

sharing the flying of a plane. The sound room is a small cockpit, noisy as hell, the computers glare until your eyes burn, you forget to eat. You know the direction of travel, but the ground isn't familiar. It's like you know you're on course in your hidden places and you can't stop. Our next CD, *Change*, is now underway, and again the hum has started... please stay tuned..."



Other upcoming projects include an installation called *Icons*, which Duncan describes, "an installation with macro-photos of the vaginas of six women printed 12 ft. high and drawings of these images made in my blood." And as for sound projects, he and Bernhard Guenter (Trente Oiseaux label head) just released *Home: Unspeakable* on Trente Oiseaux (TOC 964), which Charles Powne at Soleilmoon describes as, "either the most brilliant conceptual work ever created, or else it's just 'unlistenable.'"

"Giuliana Stefani and I just recorded *Charge Field* to be put out on Touch/Ash, a remix of the *Disinformation* CD they released last year," explains Duncan. "Max, Benzene and I are working on *Change*, going further into a track I recorded in August '96 for the 'Mind of a Missile' project on Heel Stone." If this schedule of events and projects sounds a little cumbersome, it's normal for Duncan. He's always busy pushing some limit to it's breaking point, learning what he can from it, then passing the knowledge on to others through one medium or another. -Roy C. Usery

For more information regarding John Duncan's many projects, look at his personal web-site at: <http://www.xs4all.nl/~jduncan/>. Most of his records are available here in the U.S. through Soleilmoon Mailorder at P.O. Box 83296 Portland, OR 97283 USA. Write for their free catalog or check it out on the web at <http://www.soleilmoon.com>.

necropolis

The Stanford Linear Accelerator tunnel is a straight line of prefabricated steel structures several stories high, connected end-to-end, 2 miles (3+ kilometers) long. Inside, microwave electron drivers are set every 10 meters, each unit emitting an intense, disorienting 120Hz buzz that creates phasing effects with the other units near it, all in an enclosed straight line that stretches out to a vanishing point. These drivers propel electrons in parallel paths along the tunnel up to velocities just under the speed of light, toward a collision chamber at the far end where the paths split and the electrons are driven into each other head-on. The collision chamber is a solid-steel cylinder roughly 20 meters thick, with a hollow center roughly the same diameter as the length of a one-bedroom apartment. The temperature of the center at the moment of collision reaches 3 billion degrees Kelvin, cooled by a liquid nitrogen cryogenic system. The chamber and several monitoring stations are mounted on a multi-story steel scaffold that was originally designed by shipbuilders to support a supertanker in dry-dock. This entire structure occupies the far end of a very large prefabricated steel building, that itself is easily large enough to house several 747's, one on top of the other.

The place is full of contradictions: structures built to dwarf and outlast their creators, designed to generate subatomic events that take place in a time scale that is experientially impossible to imagine, using forces and processes that are hostile or lethal to human life, yet are entirely human-created. A 'city of the dead' that seems to have an existence of its own with or without its operators. For this work, the electron is understood as a metaphor for the process of life: isolated, compelled by a system that uses the electron's own energy to force it into a path that leads at a constantly increasing pace to certain destruction — to a point of certain change, of complete resolution and the beginning of a new process



daniel menche

interview by Roy C. Usery

Portland, Oregon's sonic sculptor, Daniel Menche is hard at work on his first full-length LP since 1994's smoldering *Static Burn*. His fiery compositions provide expansive, ear-grinding soundtracks for the endtime and beyond. The following is an update of sorts to what is going on in this noise-man's busy life.

What can you tell me about the new record you're working on for Side Effects? I know you're using more technology than usual, but what can you tell me about your plans?

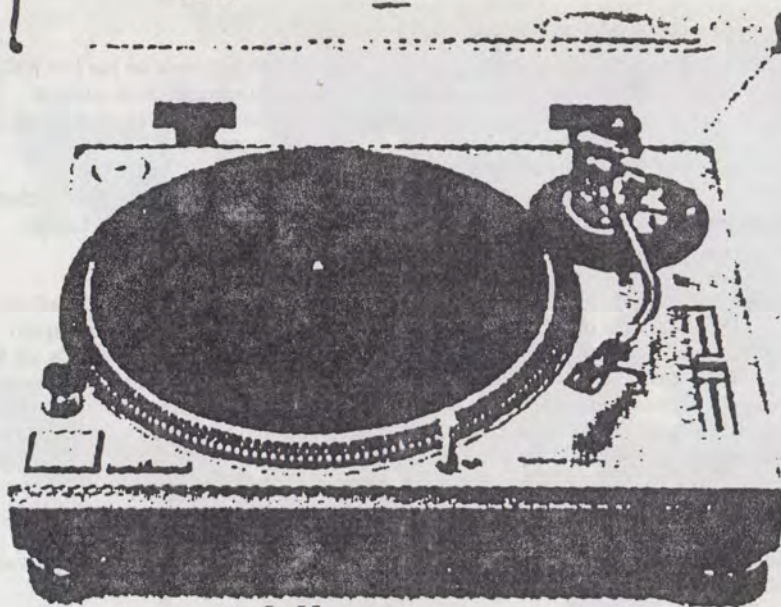
The new C.D. of mine from Side Effects is called *Screaming Caress* and it will be released in February of '97, and I am beyond excited for it. It's my first full-length studio C.D. in two years and it's definitely a big jump up from my past C.D.'s. It's like comparing a bad *Beavis and Butthead* cartoon to that Japanese cartoon *Akira*. *Screaming Caress* is a lot more of everything, with extreme amounts of detail and power in the sounds. It's my most proudest work yet, and I am happy that Lustmord (Brian Williams) pushed hard enough to expand my music. He's kinda like a boxing coach for me. He slaps my ass straight to throw the strongest punches. It's been brutal, yet healthy discipline. And yes it's true: I do use very excellent studio with rather high-tech recording stuff but I'm definitely more primitive and rawer in the sound sources as ever. It's very funny to see me in this nice studio, making a mess, breaking things, punching microphones, and having all that going into fancy recording stuff. I really feel my music needs better recording technology for more power and detail in all the noise. I think it separates my work from others a bit this way, and my music sounds terrible from a lo-fi approach.

Do you have any other projects coming up you can tell me about?

Right now I am working on a C.D. for Ash International (no title yet). It will be totally different approach from my other works-much weirder sound sources and different compositional approach. Mayuko Hino of C.C.C.C. is letting me use her raw vocal sounds as sound source, so this will be a fun C.D. to work on. After this I will do the final mixes on the collaboration C.D. I'm doing with Aube. It's been two years in the working, but it will be finally realized soon. The whole C.D. is made from rain storm sounds from Japan and America and we both went crazy treating the rain sounds. Now I gotta do the final mix, and then I will record a full C.D. of 1997 remixes of *Furnace Fucker*, *Blood Sand*, *Chrome Homicide*, and *Furious Eclipse* and possibly other remixes. I'm thinking of calling it something silly like "Furnace Fucker and Other Fellow Fiends." For some weird reason I still laugh my ass off over that title. After that C.D., there's a lot of ideas but I must refrain from having too many releases-I think it's an unhealthy trend now having as many noise releases as possible-so expect an mellow pace for my releases.

What got you into making sounds in the first place?

I never really had any music experience at all. I knew I could have learned to play music, but I didn't like following the rules of the music language. I really felt I can still do music but I wasn't interested in mindless noise either, so a middle ground had to be chosen. So around '89 I started messing around with crappy tape recorders and speakers and junk. By '92 things started to take shape and looking like my noise was making sense. Then I got offered a C.D. from Soleilmoon and I really got my head together got serious. That was *Incineration*, my first C.D. A rather crude recording at the time, but it showed I had a future to grow. It's been just a few years, but my music has progressed a lot more terms of depth and power. I'm happy to see my little



turntablismus

(continued from cover)

Hip-hop as a subculture started in the early 70's in New York City with graffiti artists and breakdancers. Breakdancers were b-boy crews who would wait for the break of a song (when the rhythm and the beat were at their utmost urgency) to bust their gyrating dance moves. Originally DJ's were just that, Disc Jockeys. They spun records at parties for people to dance to. Using two turntables and a mixing board, so the jams never stopped, the DJ kept the beats pumping. MC's would take turns on the mic, primarily acting as cheer leaders for the party.

The increasing presence of B-boys caused one of the more industrious DJ's (Grandmaster Flash) to start repeating the break of a record over and over, using two copies of the same record, and switching back and forth from one turntable to the other. This heightened the immediate groove and provided a soundtrack for the B-boys to dance to and for the MC's to rap over. All of these things together (Graffiti, Breaking, Rapping, and DJing) provide the genesis and the core of hip-hop as a culture and a lifestyle.

"Most record companies think they're in the record business," Tom Silverman, founder of Tommy Boy records, says coolly. "We don't think we're in the record business. We know we're in the lifestyle business... Goods and services have been evolving toward information. It's almost a spiritual thing." Silverman is one of the few people in the record industry that sees mass marketing this way.

A decade ago, when a hip-hop group came out it consisted of two main components: the MC (acting as vocalist), and the DJ (acting as instrumentalist, or band). Nowadays, there a rare few who hold true to this original archetype. The majority of artists today are just rappers with their images and larger-than-life personas. With the proliferation of the sampler and the "Hip Hop Producer" (i.e. Dr. Dre, Puffy Combs, Pete Rock, etc.), the DJ has been left deep in the underground.

Being a huge Public Enemy fan in the mid-to-late eighties, when I first heard that Terminator X was doing a solo record sometime in 1990, I couldn't wait to hear Norman Rogers just slash shit up for a full LP.

Needless to say after hearing the record (which, if you recall had would-be up-and-coming guest rappers blabbing all over Terminator's tracks) my hopes were about the only thing that got slashed up... Now, almost ten years later, major labels are finally releasing instrumental hip-hop records. DJ Q-bert of the Bay Area's own Invisible Scratch Pickles jokingly blames the delay on procrastination, but others take a more serious view.

"It hasn't taken ten years," insists DJ Spooky. "It's taken two, maybe three centuries. The cultural basis of pulling shit together has been a tradition that has occurred in many cultures. I think that with technology, people have found the time and energy to mutate the narratives of their environment into their own text." Align this with KRS-ONE's view that Egyptian Hieroglyphics represent the first graffiti in history, and you'll find that the roots of hip hop run deeper than most people dare to admit.

"On a more contemporary note," continues Spooky. "Record labels just weren't willing to put out instrumental albums 'cause of the usual bullshit around sales, etc. In '97 though, so many people are looking to the 'cool-out' vibe on one hand, and a more active engagement with the music on another. These are two variables that let the breakthrough occur." Spooky's own records (most recently *Songs of a Dead Dreamer* on Asphodel and *Necropolis: The Dialogic Project* on Knitting Factory Works) prove his theories beyond any doubt. Even as the instrumental side continues to grow within itself (with the DJ battle crews like the Bay Area's Scratch Pickles, and Bulletproof Scratch Hamsters, L.A.'s Beat Junkies, and New York's X-Men, and the sound-scape creators like DJ Spooky, DJ Shadow, DJ Krush, etc.), hip-hop's musical influence is far-reaching and not too difficult to recognize.

"Public Enemy was the first thing I heard that made me say, 'how the hell did they do that?'" claims the heavily hip-hop influenced Jack Dangers of Meat Beat Manifesto. Dangers, who once made claims that rhyming as a vocal form was stagnant, now cites DJ Spooky's universally-minded mixology, and Plug's (Luke Vibert also of Wagon Christ fame) drum n' bass

excursions as leaders of the next school.

"I listen to hip-hop more so than any sort of rock music," explains Justin Broadrick who, among various other projects, heads up England's industrial-grind kings Godflesh. "I don't really find a lot in modern rock music that's sort of groovy anymore or heavy to the extent that it's imaginative. I find hip-hop more the music of the future, whereas rock music is more obsessed with being stuck in the past." To wit, Godflesh infuses hip-hop beats, programmed rhythms, and samples into its harsh, guitar-driven sound. But people deeply ensconced in the hip-hop underground show the same "stuck in the past" frustration with their own genre.

"Hip-hop just needs to grow up," says Davis, California's Josh Davis a.k.a. DJ Shadow adamantly. "Because everybody's still talking about the same stuff we were talking about five years ago, ten years ago..." If one were to judge the strength of hip hop based on Shadow's new full-length record, *Endtroducing...* (available from MoWax/frr), then it would be found alive, well, and expanding in all directions. On the other hand, if one were to judge the strength of hip-hop based on the charts, or the subject matter of most of today's rappers, the musical integrity of the genre would've been dead years ago.

"I don't think that hip-hop is wack these days," explains a serious DJ Spooky. "I just think the music surrounding hip-hop, stuff that is derivative of the original value structure without caring about the core ideas driving urban youth culture, i.e. truly commercial shit, has taken precedence. But on the other hand, people need to open up and check music from around the world. I don't know about you, but I'm kind of tired with the whole funk/70's fusion samples with a jazzy sound that went out in like '94. People need to open up the realm of where they take their sources from, where they look for ancestors of their rhythms, know what I'm saying? Shit like just killing people, shit like just robbing people, shit like, 'bitches, hos, etc.' I ain't really trying to hear anymore"

"I just think hip-hop has gotten really conservative and commercial," agrees a resolved DJ Shadow. "It was something I was really concerned about in '91 and '92, but I just can't be bothered about it anymore. Almost everyone's heroes went out, that's what caused this scramble, from there being a unification in the underground to being really divisive East Coast vs. West Coast, gangster versus not, what's real vs. what's not... I don't know anybody around in hip-hop today who was around before it was really popular and I think you had to have been into it before 1988. That was when hip-hop was really shat on in America, completely disregarded and actually oppressed as an art form. I don't know anybody that was around then that's around now that likes the way things are going."

Given how ill-perceived, and corrupted main-stream hip-hop is, hardcore beat-makers and record-scratchers persistently provide evidence that their trade is a viable art form. Q-bert continues to, "give [the non-believers] an example of how [the turntable] is a musical instrument." In one of his many dissertations on the subject, DJ Spooky called the art of DJing, "...virtual absence" — being everywhere and nowhere — as a stepping stone, and by incorporating all the elements of a virus into its culture, [thriving] in a place where everything that had been possibly put in its way to kill it has failed..." Thus making the DJ's art of synthesis a permanent and ever-changing phenomenon.

"The thing that attracted me to hip-hop is the marriage of genres of music," DJ Shadow reflects. "Bambataa and Flash, when they were DJing, would not just mix only funk and soul, but also rock, Kraftwerk, everything... TV themes, comedy albums... They could get away with it, that was what was interesting and entertaining the dance floor and the b-boys at the time. It was who could pull the illest shit out of their crate. People would say, 'you can't play that,' they'd say, 'watch!' and play 'Back in Black' or something. To me being true just means not being afraid to try new things and that doesn't mean recycling the same old formula." This "same old formula" is what most of hip-hop is made up of today, yet there are many underground artists who are truly trying to expand hip-hop in new directions and trying to keep the art of DJing alive in the purest sense.

"I think that Peanut Butter Wolf is definitely on an expansion zone," acknowledges Spooky. "Alec Empire is definitely opening shit up for punk-hip-hop, the whole NYC illbeint vibe [including such artists as We, Byzar, Sub Dub, DJ Soulslinger, Lucy, Ben Neill, and DJ Spooky himself, among others] is definitely on the futurestep, and of course the X-men. Not to mention the whole drum n' bass phenomenon. People should peep Dilinger's shit, people should peep Bobby Konders dancehall reggae hip-hop, they should check Hassan Hakmoun's Moroccan gnoua music. There's a whole world out there."

A whole world indeed...

Roy C. Usery

Sources of information:

- DJ Spooky quotes taken from an interview on 011997 by Roy C. Usery, and from: *CUMULUS FROM AMERICA; CARTRIDGE MUSIC: OF PALIMPSESTS AND PARATAXIS OR HOW TO MAKE A MIX* by Paul D. Miller (a.k.a. DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid), and *Liner notes to Valis I: The Destruction of Syntax* (on Subharmonic) by Paul D. Miller
- Q-bert quotes taken from an interview conducted on 011497 by Roy C. Usery.
- DJ Shadow quotes stolen from an article by Miguel D'Souza from *The Sydney Morning Herald*, December 8, 1995: (<http://www.smh.com.au/metro/content/951208/feature3.html>)



Current Suggested Listening:

- DJ Spooky *Songs of a Dead Dreamer* (Asphodel) and *Necropolis: The Dialogic Project* (Knitting Factory Works).
- DJ Shadow *Endtroducing...* (MoWax/ffrr).
- Various Artists *Return of the DJ* (Bomb Recordings 4104 24th Street, Suite #105 San Francisco, CA 94114) featuring Invisible Scratch Pickles, Peanut Butter Wolf, Rob Swift, X-Men, Kool DJ EQ and many others.
- Various Artists *Altered Beats* (Axiom) featuring DJ Krush, Prince Paul, DXT, Rob Swift, etc.
- Various Artists *Incursions in Illbient* (Asphodel) featuring We, Sub Dub, Byzar, and DJ Spooky.
- Of course, the ultimate DJ track, "Grand Master Flash's Adventures on the Wheels of Steel" proves every point made in this article...

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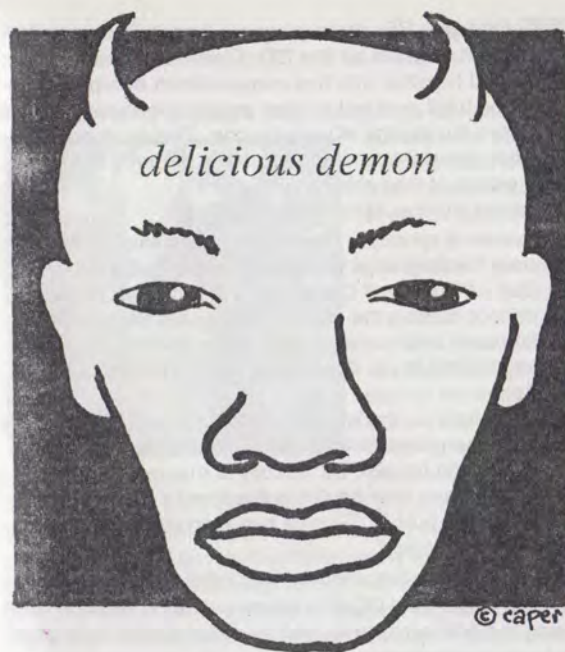
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RE:Views
by Roy C. Usery

TRICKY *Pre-Millennium Tension* CD (Island): As hip hop keeps expanding and extending in all directions, certain artists are leading the way toward uncharted beat-driven territories. Tricky has proven in the past two years (with three full-length records, an EP, and several tracks strewn among compilations and soundtracks) that he is one of these leaders.

Pre-Millennium Tension finds Tricky and his side-kick/mother-of-his-daughter Martina Topley-Bird far more in your face and under your skin. Hectic tracks like "Christinsands," "Bad Dream" (my personal favorite), and the cover of Eric B. and Rakim's classic cut "Lyrics of Fury" show Tricky can down right rock out. The more laid-back grooves of "Makes Me Wanna Die," "My Evil is Strong," and "Piano" barely hold the stress at bay.

Not without their flaws (the tedious "Ghetto Youth," and "Sex Drive"), the genius of Tricky and of *Pre-Millennium* is their ability to maintain an overall vibe that is anxious and uncomfortable, but still keep the grooves funky as hell. Pass Tricky the keys. It's his turn to drive...

DRAIN *Offspeed and In There* CD: Butthole Surfers' King Coffey off-shoot Drain's second record, like some old WaxTrax releases, mixes beats and sounds into an off-kilter soundtrack for delusion. But where the old WaxTrax artists left something to be craved, Drain has a firm grasp on what matters: The Groove. Sure, you can dance to KMFDM, or Thrill Kill Kult, but with *Offspeed and In There*, you HAVE to shake yer butt whilst you try and figure it out.

There's a lot of this beat/loop-oriented stuff popping up lately, presumably because of the lack of rules governing such releases, the punk/DIY addage of "anyone can do it," and it's ready acceptance in the face of all this sameness. Beware: this stuff will soon all run together. But before it does, let us give Coffey and Drain their due.

File Under: Drip Hop. **See Also:** Land of the Loops (Trance Syndicate P.O. Box 47991 Austin, TX 78765).

JAMES PLOTKIN/MICK HARRIS *Collapse* CD: Ambient gurus James Plotkin and Mick Harris join forces to make one heck of a racket on this CD. Treated guitars and "natural and unnatural sounds" are swirled together into five compositions of droning hums and intermittent clicks, but you'd be hard pressed to hear anything except your own darkest thoughts creeping up on you from the depths of your psyche. This is an hour-plus soundtrack of forgotten memories by two men who undoubtedly have demons to toil with. It's a worthwhile journey into the dark edges of their minds. And yours (Asphodel/Sombient P.O. Box 51 Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113).

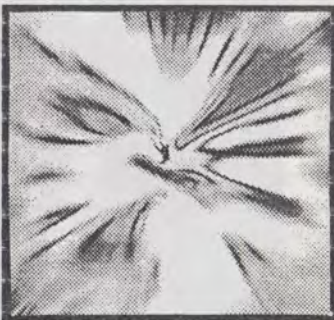
DJ SPOOKY *Songs of a Dead Dreamer* (Asphodel): New names are being made up daily for the things DJ Spooky does. Call it "Illbient." Call it "Trip Hop." Call it whatever you like, but words cannot contain the sounds he creates. Categorical lines are criss-crossed with every passing track. It's impossible to pin down what "That Subliminal Kid" does when he's on the wheels of steel. Just like back in the day when Grandmaster Flash started confusing folks by looping breaks, DJ Spooky is mapping out the future every time he drops the needle in the groove. Or, as he puts it, "Gimme two records and I'll make you a universe."



RAPOON *Darker By Light* CD: Rapoon is founding member of Zoviet France, Robin Storey's solo guise and *Darker By Light* is the third CD of a trilogy capturing Rapoon from three different angles. This one being the first to make its end as a true studio recording (part one, *Recurring (Dream Circle)* was a retrospective of sorts and part two, *Errant Angels* was a live improvisational performance). The throbbing ambience and subtly shifting textures herein show Storey adeptly bringing ancient, organic rhythms into the present and beyond.

Darker By Light also finds Rapoon infectious. If you can get the sporadic beats of "Lies and Propaganda" out of your head, even after just one listen, you're stronger than I (Soleilmoon P.O. Box 83296 Portland, OR 97283-0296).

DIVINATION: DISTILL (Various Artists) CD: Fleeting thoughts and forgotten dreams rushing back into your head, building into waves of synapses, and then crashing in on each other: that is the sound of this double CD. It's an endless soundtrack to all the things hidden deep in your mind. So far down, you'd given up on anything bringing them back to the surface. Listen as ambient masters Paul Shutze, Pete Namlook, Haruomi Hosono, Mick Harris, Thomas Koner, Anton Fier, Tetsu Inoue, and Bill Laswell take turns stirring the deep, dark waters of your inner conscience. You may be surprised what you hear bubbling to the top (Sub Meta).

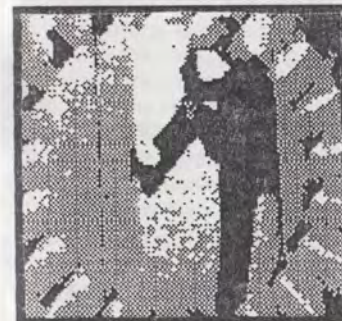


GODFLESH *Songs of Love and Hate* (Earache) Somewhere between the overwrought riffage of heavy metal and the stale mechanism of post-industrial music, Godflesh has carved out a niche of harsh, driving grooves, beats, and riffs unmatched by any other purveyors of the same ground.

Somewhere between the rolling guitar-lava of *Streetcleaner* and the twisted hip hop beats of *Pure*, Justin K. Broadrick (guitar/vocals), Benny Green (bass), and new recruit Brian Mantia (drums) found the soil from which to cultivate *Songs of Love and Hate*. The same bone-crushing power they've made ever-so listenable in the past is still painfully evident, but this time around the grooves are up front and inescapable. The addition of Mantia on drums (as well as their usual machine-driven rhythms) gives Godflesh an organic feel that was all but missing on 1994's *Selfless*.

All things considered, *Songs of Love and Hate* fits easily on the Godflesh list of must-haves, and could just as easily be their best record yet. There is indeed hope for the future.

KEN NORDINE *Colors* (Asphodel): Ken Nordine is a name you probably haven't heard that belongs to a voice you probably have.



Commercials were his home in the past, but on his disc *Colors*, you'll hear him describe and pontificate about 34 different hues. About Azure he states, "As sure as there's azure it's true. Azure is bored with just being blue." And upon *Flesh* he imposes, "Flesh as a color is in a mess. Yes, ask anyone with flesh and they'll tell you *Flesh*, as a color, is about as close to a problem as a color can get." Ken also uses *Flesh* as an opportunity to take a stand on racism: "Some people think that the only color 'Flesh color' should be is the color their flesh is, which, pure and simple, is color-centric thinking. Popular in some corners..." You get the idea...

THE FLYING LUTTENBACHERS *The Revenge of The Flying Luttenbachers* CD:

Where The Luttenbachers' *Destructo Noise Explosion!* was improv jazz weaned on caffeine-induced psychosis, *Revenge* is the same with a near overdose of death metal guitar. The songs still jump around like three A.D.D. children without parental supervision (and a bottle of Coke instead of Ritalin), but one of them found a knife.

If you dig screechy improv jazz with plenty of speed and chaos, then The Luttenbachers are playing in your alley, but beware of the one with the knife: he'll cut you (Skin Graft P.O. Box 257546 Chicago, IL 60625).

PROJECT W CD: What at first listen may sound like a cello, a drum kit, and a sax in a caucauphonous melee for control later evolves into Brent Arnold (cello), Ed Pias (drums), and Wally Shoup (sax) attempting to communicate with each other in incongruent languages.

Finally, upon repeated listens, *Project W* becomes three very adept musicians in a string of intoxicating, even if undulating compositions of intricate improvisation, each taking turns in the fore and each communicating with the others quite effectively. The listener is the one left to learn their beautiful language (Apraxis P.O. Box 85155 Seattle, WA 98145).

YOU FANTASTIC *The Riddler* EP (Skin Graft): Ex-Dazzling Killmen Darin Gray and Tim Garrigan, along with Illusion of Safety/Brise Glace/Yona-Kit man Thymme Jones have come together to form You Fantastic and frankly, I'm bewildered. You Fantastic's music is almost devoid of reason, let alone structure, and in a manner that's in no way akin to any of the aforementioned bands.

This 16-minute EP tracks ten songs, but you'd be hard-pressed to find their beginnings and endings. It's more of a total composition (or lack thereof) than individual ones. It's intriguing and quite interesting, even if you never really figure it out.

SCORN *Logghi Barogghi* (Earache): Since Nicholas J. Bullen left Scorn in the capable hands of his partner Mick Harris, it seems Harris has all but dropped their previous high-gloss production and opted to create Scorn's beat-driven paranoia with a more stripped-down approach. This leaves the dark atmospheres and head-bobbing grooves with less clutter and more sparse area in which to spread out. Without the smoke screen, the beats have more room to breathe. He doesn't, however leave anything to be missed. On the contrary, everything that was attractive and interesting about a Scorn record is here on *Logghi Barogghi*, there's just less of it to decipher.

Nothing against Bullen (who's gone on to create good things on his own), but Harris lets the listener into the core of what Scorn is all about, even if it's just by leaving the door slightly ajar.

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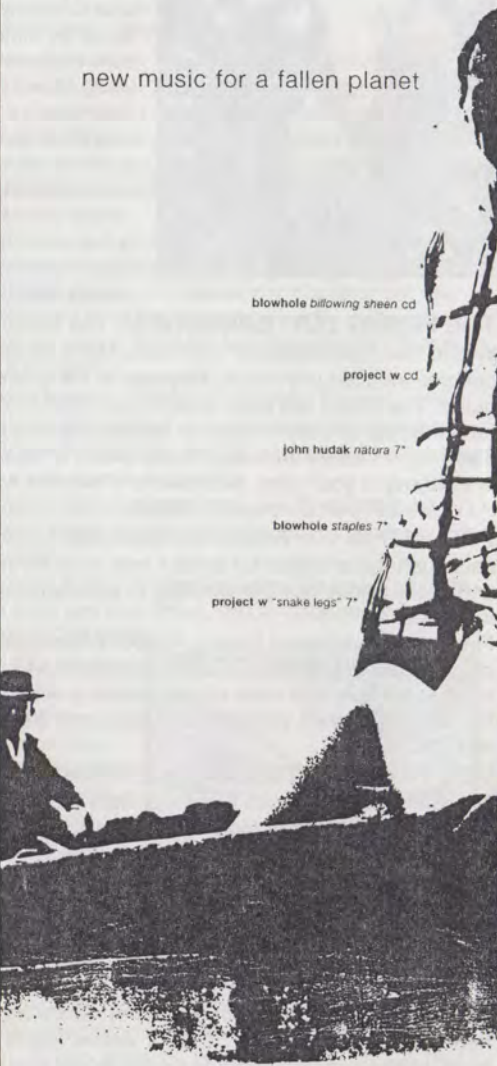
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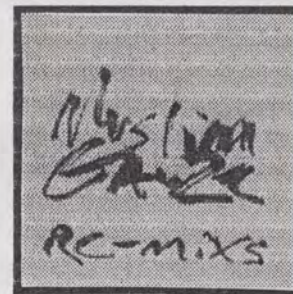
DANIEL MENCHE *Legions in the Walls* (Trente Oisaux): Portland, Oregon's own, Daniel Menche is an undisputed master of noise. His majestic sound sculptures are sometimes soothing, and other times infinitely grating, but he elicits a sense of control unparalleled in this oft out-of-control genre.

Throughout his tours during '94 and '95, he created and controlled said sounds using his usual pressure mics and effects, but added a sheet of glass, and a mound of iodized salt as instruments. Crowds stood astounded as Menche poured the salt on the glass then let loose with the mics, grinding them against the salt covered glass with one hand and twiddling knobs with the other. He built sounds so huge and threatening, you'd think you were standing next to a Boeing 747 preparing for take off. But he'd just as easily leave you in a crackling near-silence with your heart racing, trying to catch your breath. *Legions in the Walls* documents several of Menche's shows during his '94-'95 tours: nine tracks of mic-grinding assaults and salt covered stages. For the true-to-live feel, you must play this at the highest possible volume.

WIRE *Turns and Strokes* CD: A compilation of live tracks from one of the most influential bands this side of Mars, *Turns and Strokes* documents some of the obscure parts of the end of Wire's hey day from '79 to '80. It was typical of Wire to perform sets consisting of almost all new material. Because of this habit, lots of Wire material never made it to record. This CD is an attempt to document some of those lost songs. The opening track, "Safe" is classic Wire at its best. As are "Remove For Improvement," "Inventory," and of course the raucous version of "12XU." It's an interesting ride all the way through, but those four alone make this a Wire must-have (WMO P.O. Box 322 Alto Loma, CA 91701-0322).

LOVELIESCRUSHING *Xuvetyn* CD: This Arizona duo mixes completely decommissioned guitar sounds with soft, but powerful female vocals. No beat. No bass. Just swirling, amorphous waves of cotton candy guitar and sweet female vocals. Scott Cortez plays his best Kevin Shields while Melissa Arpin does her best Elizabeth Fraser, but (much like if My Bloody Valentine and the Cocteau Twins actually collaborated) *Xuvetyn* doesn't sound like either of those bands, leaving me surrounded by gooey taffy-sounds, groping for a reference point (Projekt P.O. Box 1591 Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591).

MUSLIMGAUZE *Remixs* (Soleilmoon): This three-track CD (don't be fooled, *Remixs* clocks in at over an hour) finds Muslimgauze reworking, relooping, and remixing old compositions into completely unrecognizable new ones. The sounds herein are, on the whole, trance-inducing hums, buzzes, and beats that bounce around your head like insects you only tolerate because you realize their higher purpose. After repeated listens though, these "insects" do their "pollinating" and you're left with a higher level of understanding than you once thought possible. In other words, this stuff grows on you. Just listen to it a lot.



CASPAR BROTZMANN/PAGE HAMILTON *Zulutime* CD: *Zulutime*, the long-awaited collaboration between guitar terrorist Caspar Brotzmann and his "American brother" Page Hamilton, was once part four of UK label Sub Rosa's *Subsonic* series (which has featured such artists as Godflesh's Justin K. Broadrick, ambient guru Bill Laswell, and guitar tweekers Fred Frith and Azonic's Andy Hawkins, among others), but some legal minutia kept it on hold until Atavistic was able to get it to these shores. Unlike other *Subsonic* releases, which have featured artists working independently on their own tracks, *Zulutime* finds Brotzmann and Hamilton actually collaborating on six tracks of scraping guitar noise. Brotzmann's work here doesn't stray too far from his usual fare as part of his group Caspar Brotzmann Massaker, but Hamilton is given plenty of room to stretch out and enjoy the sounds his guitar can make, room that his work with Helmet doesn't afford. It's a beautiful forty-eight minutes of guitars humming, screeching,

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