

Mp3 Kilroy - Thai Stick Dragon



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Big beats and dark themes: sick, desperate, lo-fi, and lush 10 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: House, HIP HOP/RAP: East Coast Details: Kilroy Was Here A Philly electro-pop artist makes it stick. by A.D. Amorosi

Shawn Kilroy is dynamite. Not because his CD release part at Five Spot a few weeks ago got held up by a bomb threat in a nearby establishment. Or because he named his new album Thai Stick Dragon, in honor of a detonations expert "I'm the motherfuckin' bomb," jokes Philly's finest exponent of mad electronic pop. "I'm a blast from the past. My record's blowin' up. I'm here to blow your mind. I'm a prophet of the coming consciousness explosion and nostalgia implosion." To these ears, Kilroy has always been an explosive presence, ever since his tart, electro-tinged band Boyd of London. Their eponymous 2002 CD and its follow-up, Spot Sounds, struck a blow at what Kilroy views as alterna-rock's blandness. "Two guitars, bass and drums?" he says. "Heard it before. Indie rock is trying to sound like The Beatles and not The Beatles at the same time. Fuck that: Let's move." Boyd of London moved with a bass-heavy, electronic-based musicality that kept itself abreast of pop melody. But the band also had four good songwriters vying for space and time. "It was hard to get songs in," says Kilroy, who doubled as Boyd's booking agent, a rough task with so many people's schedules to accommodate. "I decided to be set up so I could play whenever I wanted, and call it Kilroy because the lineup's never the same." He embarked on the solo route with The Neon Gate in 2004. The dashing electronic record mixed the sort of kinky prog rock, garage-psychedelia, synth-y new wave and jarring storytelling Neil Young surely was going for on Trans. Or what Bowie was after on Heroes. "That record was about finding a door," says Kilroy of Neon. "This new one had to walk through that door to chase the unending night." Thai Stick Dragon had to be radder, had to be filled with a darker cast of characters than the previous efforts. And Kilroy felt he had to play them all. Certainly making adventurous electronic music, and creating musical personae to match,

hints at a David Bowie influence in Kilroy's past. To look for it in the present, check out his performance at Gemini Wolf/Mikronesia's Bowie-cover night at Fishtown's Rocket Cat Caf. "Thai Stick takes from Bowie in that I'm playing characters," says Kilroy. "I don't have a drug problem. My woman ain't causing me heartache and dying at the piano. I'm not William Burroughs in Tangier. I get to live that on the record and at the shows." One adventure Kilroy did truly live was diving down 2,000 feet into a central Pennsylvania coal mine while filming *Hard Coal* with Marc Brodzik. Kilroy's been in charge of sound on many of Brodzik's projectslocation recording, producing music and scores, editing and mixing the films themselvesince they befriended each other a decade ago. It was while working on *Hard Coal* that he met the aforementioned detonations expert, a burned-out miner named Ernie Lucas. He told Kilroy a story about getting blown up in a mine explosion many years ago. The tops of his ears got burned off as well as his two forearm tattoos: a unicorn and a Thai stick dragon. Somehow, Kilroy's new album didn't sound like a Unicorn. Instead, it's hard, sick and desperate, lo-fi and lush. Perhaps having friends like Jim Rafter co-write its coldest tune, "Snake Charmer," helped give it that dire sound. "He's missing, hit the street hard," says Kilroy, seriously, about his friend's addictions. That's a central theme that chases the Dragonthe lure of drugs. Kilroy sees this record as a love letter to his friends who never made it back. "You may be the hardcore walking dead," says Kilroy. "But when you die, and you're gonna die soon, that's when it begins."

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