

## Mp3 The Silent Boys - Progression: 1986 - 1991



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23 tracks of smart and slightly rough guitar pop compiled from the Silent Boys' 80s recordings. Inspired by Creation Records, C-86, Brit post-punk, NZ ethereal pop, and The Feelies. 23 MP3 Songs in this album (60:06) ! Related styles: POP: 80's Pop, POP: Jangle Pop People who are interested in The Cure Joy Division The Feelies should consider this download. Details: The Big Take-Over 80s fanzines had a bad attitude about Anglophile bands, but that was xenophobia, as this collection reminds. This Virginia band has released their albums this decade, but Progression reveals they were inspired bastard children of Brit post-punk, C-86 jangle-guitar, and New Zealand ethereal pop back in those halcyon days. Heard now, the nascent 'Boys are roughly like Joy Division and early Cure backing Lawrence in Felt (apparently with a key assist from our Feelies), and the opening "Band From Heaven" reverently refers to the Fall's classic 1979 7" "Totally Wired." There's resemblance, too, to the Liverpool explosion (Bunnymen, Wah, Teardrop Explodes) and early Creation Records bands, with singer Wallace Dietz retaining some of the icy semi-detached bravura of those bands. This is fun while a new fourth LP, Princess By the Sea, looms. (Jack Rabid) BabySue.com Originally formed in the 1980s, The Silent Boys reformed in 1999 and have since released three new albums (Beauty Tips, Wishing Well Eyes, One Step Closer). This CD collects some of the band's best tracks from their early days. Some of the low fidelity pop cuts on this album bear a slight resemblance to The Television Personalities...while others sound just like what they are: lost garage pop nuggets from the past. The sparse sounds on this album are probably too peculiar for the casual listener, as the guys in The Silent Boys were (and probably still are) playing for a very select audience. There's a lot to take in here...23 tracks of smart and slightly rough guitar pop. The more you listen to this band's music...the more it grows on you. Our favorite tracks include "Band From Heaven," "Scream," "Black and White," "India," and "Dreaming Away." (Rating: 5/6) Adequacy.net Im not gonna lie:

I like re-issues of 80s post-punk and indie-rock gems. A handful of these, including ones by Crippled Pilgrims and Dumptruck, have stood the test of time and sound prescient. The Silent Boys has now released *Progression: 1986-1991* as a retrospective of its early days. The band has re-formed and released a few albums in recent years, but it's the early recordings that still generate interest. Listening to any album from the late 80s requires a little context in order to be fully appreciated—it's hard not to sound dated, after all, and only a few records sound truly timeless. *Progression* has some dark material à la Joy Division (Batman is even a little like a Fire Engines song with its herky-jerky guitar) but isn't afraid to cop a Feelies stance now and again, as on *Black and White* and *Remember*. *See You Later* could also be a Feelies B-side, with maybe a nod or two to Translator and Green on Red. If the earliest works sound too derivative, it's forgivable. There was a lot of sharing going on at the time. *Scream* has the hallmarks of early Goth, for example, with its reverbed chorus and quasi-tribal rhythm supplemented of course with prominent bass. What passed for sinister and subversive for the time, though, strikes us today as pretty tame and mild. Sometimes laughably so. Because *Progression* compiles 23 tracks over 5 years, it's in some ways a document of what was hip at the time for each of those years. The Silent Boys doesn't exactly have a distinctive style of its own but rather seem to be taken along with the currents of the times. *Leningrad* might have some clichéd lyrical content (something about passions fire growing higher and higher), but musically it's a successfully nervous stab at dark pop. *Eternity* takes a page from O'Positives *Say Goodbye* at the beginning and then fuses it to a very Fiction Bridge guitar sequence and it too coalesces nicely. Yeah, it was probably a powerful song in its day. Music since has taken the bite out of this more dated material. By the way, the vocals, drums, and guitar on *Eternity* end up making it self-consciously sound like a lost Joy Division single, which was most likely the intent. It's always cool to have another document from that period of time, or at least it is for completists who still break out the old LPs now and again. If The Silent Boys doesn't inform as much as reflect the sounds of the times, that's OK: *Progression* is still a decent glimpse at what was going on back then. As a bonus, *Starry Skies* sounds like a cross between the aforementioned Fire Engines and Haircut 100. It's those kind of unlikely hybrids that are the most curious and instructive. (David Smith) Dagger I had no idea that Virginian Wallace Dietz (who IS The Silent Boys) has been perfecting his craft for over two decades. I first heard about the band from the indiepop list and Wallace was nice enough to send me a few of his previous releases (them being 2007's *ONE STEP CLOSER*, 2006's *WISHING WELL EYES* and 2004's *BEAUTY TIPS*). This, as

the title implies, is an odds and sods collection spanning those 5 years in the late 80s and into the 90s. There's 23 songs in all and there's some interesting liners where Wallace describes the comings and goings of his life when the songs were recorded. The songs definitely sound of another time, a handful of the tracks, like *Scream* and *Plastic Cowboy* sound like they could have been recorded for the Factory label (some Joy Division influence there and even a big New Order influence on the opening cut, *Band from Heaven*) while others are janglier and bear more of a Feelies influences (*See You Later, I Wanted To See You*, etc.) and plenty of C86 and Sarah Records moments creep in as well. The band is more than the sum of its influences, however, and if you like any or all of the bands mentioned here then this will be a most pleasant surprise. (Tim Hinely)

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