

Mp3 Boy Eats Drum Machine - Pleasure



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experimental beat-pop featuring some of portland's nastiest drummers. sultry vocals, original production, and beautiful handcrafted packaging make 'pleasure' one of 2005's highlights of independent music. 11 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Experimental, ELECTRONIC: Breakbeat/Breaks Details: have you ever wondered what would happen if dj shadow produced a neil diamond record? or if the postal service decided to spin tuff beats by portland's finest drummers instead of using sequencers? the results of those two experiments may very well resemble boy eats drum machine, the city of rose's big beat creator of experimental pop. with the drumming help of talkdemonic, danny seim of menomena, josh skins of systemwide, and charles neil of quivah, boy eats drum machine's 'pleasure' takes you on a beat infested journey of twisting moods and big pop payoffs. with the release of his latest full length cd, boy eats drum machine demonstrates portland's keen do-it-yourself ethic as he writes, records, and packages the disc from scratch. each copy has a numbered hand drawn disc and comes folded in an attractive array of pink and white paper with original artwork and design. every track on 'pleasure' finds it's own sonic space: "pleasure theme song" opens the disc with it's cold-blooded beat, falsetto loneliness, and shimmering bells, while "introduction B" boasts a mean guitar hook and thorough showcase of boy eats drum machine's skills on the turntable. the most dramatic track might be the third, "I'm an angel telling lies", as it rises from R&B ballad to full blown spook-rock with native american chanting, explosive guitars, and devastating vocal hook. "eunuch" makes being alone in the basement appealing with it's playful lines and dj dangermouse drum editing, while "introduction A" achieves a sexy latin space somewhere between dj shadow and afghan whigs. another nasty drum performance anchors "si(x)cuse me", which pairs a desperate vocal with dusty guitars not unlike the work of adrian utely of portishead. "the taste of your mouth" is the pop gem of the disc with it's flipped breakbeats and clever lyrical playfulness, while "lets get

lost sometime" delivers sensual lyrics over a bouncing new-wave chorus. "5 - 0" is ingenious in its use of voicemail as a lonely accordion floats above a lo-fi bassline and big open drum loop. The most unusual track might be "stepping on your grave", which creates a haunting reminder of deeds from the past with its northwest native drum circle and raspy vocal performance. Finally, "sometimes you wanna go where nobody knows your name" closes out the disc as a somber confession with mesmerizing organic sounds.

Big on craftiness, 'Pleasure' is truly one of 2005's highlights of independent music. ----- Pleasure press: ----- RIFF CITY LOCALIZED Artist Breaks For Pleasure Boy Eats Drum Machine teams up with some of Portland's best drummers, and they didn't even know it. BY MARK BAUMGARTEN The one-man band was once the occupation of the odd and eccentric. A brother to the 13th-century village idiot, this musician literally bore the burden of a full band on his back, lugging a woodwind section, bass drum, banjo and whatever else he could loop and tether onto his body. He looked ridiculous and the music inspired a sense of the novel, which, after a song or two, gave way to pity and a small donation. The novelty of the one-man band is once again fading in the early 21st century. As more musicians figuratively bear the burden of a band on their backs in their own personal studios, though, that novelty is giving way to awe-inspiring compositions of complexity and beauty. This, at least, is the result of Boy Eats Drum Machine's latest, *Pleasure*, a crisp and powerful solo outing of experimental pop by Portland's Jonny Ragel. The evolution that led to *Pleasure* started more than 20 years ago when DJs discovered something that would make the one-man music maker's job a little less taxing: the break. A break-and don't worry if you didn't already know this-is a single snippet of a song that is sampled (or recorded) and played over and over again to create a seamless beat for a new song. Whether it was a funky James Brown drum track or a quirky Kraftwerk synth line, the repetition did something amazing: It took the burden of the beat off the musician. Twenty-some years later, the break has been used in dance music, played with by pop musicians like Moby and reinvented through the mash-up by artists like Danger Mouse on *The Grey Album*. But there's something about the breaks used by these one-man shows that's still a little novel, or, at the very least, nostalgic. Most of their breaks are recognizable. Whether it's one of those James Brown beats, an old soul sample or a looped George Harrison guitar line, these breaks bring cultural baggage with them (and, to the delight of radio programmers, an identifiable hook). The old one-man band might have had an unsteady rhythm but at least his music sounded original. In this sense, Boy Eats Drum Machine is closer to that guy with the bass drum strapped to his back than he is to Moby.

When contemplating the creation of his next Boy Eats Drum Machine album earlier this year, the 31-year-old Ragel was turned on to an album of original live drum tracks called Bridgetown Breaks. The album features drum lines by Talkdemonic's Kevin O'Connor, Systemwide's Josh Skins, QuiVaH's Charles Neal and Menomena's Danny Seim. It also features a message: take these tracks and use them however you wish. Which is exactly what Ragel did, looping and manipulating six of the tracks to create a record that has a background of Portland's best drummers, but, to the listener, will sound like a wholly and mesmerizing original work. Ragel is not bearing the burden of a full band, or wearing the weight of his cultural predecessors. Rather, he is being lifted up by Portland's drummers, carrying with him a sonic culture and adding to it with his passionate baritone vocals and distinct instrumentation to create something new and truly great. Not bad for a one-man band.

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