

Mp3 Invisible Friend - Precinct 9



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Quietly disturbing guitar/keyboard songs that alternate between 80s New Order/Depeche Mode synth music and eerie, skeletal sketches. Recommended for devotees of 80s "alternative" rock and pop, as well as quietly reflective artists from Smog to Cat Power. 16 MP3 Songs POP: New Wave, POP: Delicate

Details: Invisible Friend - Precinct 9 Utterly unique, frequently amusing, quietly disturbing guitar/keyboard songs that alternate between 80s New Order/Depeche Mode synth music and eerie, skeletal sketches. Frontman/guitarist C. Depp has become a real avatar of creepy, minimalist songwriting: he sings with a gleam in his eye, but it's sometimes hard to tell whether he's laughing at you or plotting something more sinister, and whether the quaver in his voice is just lack of training or barely restrained rage. When he plays his songs solo, live, audiences sometimes seem to get so deeply into listening mode that they don't realize how funny some of those songs are. That humor frequently serves as comic relief here, starting with the first song, Touched by an Angel, a sad dance-pop tale of love and loss and stolen library books (just kidding). The next song Jesus Loves Me could work as a Jonathan Richman-style faux-naïf thing, or as thinly veiled sarcasm. It's hard to tell. Many of the 16 songs on the album clock in at under two minutes, including the next two. You Call Yourself My Friend is a bitter tale of trust betrayed and foreshadows the cd's title track; Own Up to It seems to be directed at someone who's closeted and hypocritical about it. The cd's next song Train to Brooklyn, sung by chanteuse Julie Margat whose careful inflections lend the cd a Nico-esque grace - begins as a sad, somber keyboard piece and then triumphantly morphs into a happy, jangly guitar hit. Other captivating songs on the album include the truly bizarre Basketball, on which Margat seems to be encouraging someone to try out for a team; Calisthenics, a laugh-out-loud funny spoof on synthesized dance music; the bone-chilling I Lied To You, which does double duty as a parable of AIDS and relationships in general; the equally eerie, puzzling,

Postman, in which the narrator seems to be telling someone who clearly has a screw loose to leave the mailman alone; and the stellar Problems with Authority, Margat's deadpan vocals evoking nothing less than the menace of Black Box Recorder's Sarah Nixey. All in all, a beguiling collection, well-produced on mostly 4-track equipment, an impressive achievement for multi-instrumentalist Andrew Malenda (whose tasteful arrangements and imaginative use of textures bring out the best in these songs). Recommended for devotees of 80s "alternative" rock and pop, as well as quietly reflective artists from Smog to Stereolab to Cat Power.

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