

## Brainwashed - Wire, "Mind Hive"

Written by Eve McGivern  
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It is a safe assumption to say that most folks who buy a ticket to a concert expect to hear a few songs from their favorite band's latest album; after all, this is how bands showcase their latest music, but also provide fans the chance to hear their earlier work. Anyone seeing Wire since the '00s can assume no such thing; entire tours have included nothing but their newest work, barely acknowledging the fact that they've been around since the '70s. Wire does what Wire wants. Thankfully, they're great at it. It's a testament that Wire can still sound like Wire, maintaining that certain "Wire" sound, and yet continuously reinvent themselves, creating memorable - and fresh — music after 40 years.

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This approach to reinvention has served Wire well. They don't need the music press to fawn over them; they've entrenched themselves in the annals of musical history. Wire is for music aficionados of all ages. Bands of such long standing stature can be prone to the crime of repeating history. This album has the band showcasing their expertise at creating familiar musical tension that stems from their punk roots, but they remain unbound by their past and allow themselves to wander, creating lush and ethereal landscapes. "Oh there's that word, ethereal, the most overused word in music." Yeah, but consider the word for a moment: the ancient Greeks believed the earth consisted of the four basic elements (earth, air, fire and water), but the heavens consisted of substance even less tangible than air known as ether, described as an invisible light or fire. Ethereal eventually came to mean anything "marked by unusual delicacy or refinement." And there you have the blend of tension and etherealness that Wire has perfected on this album: punk lullabies for existential dread.

There's a sense of that dread that runs through the entire album. The title suggests a flip on the term "hive mind," which refers to united consciousness with a lack of individuality. "Mind hive," on the other hand, suggests a figurative place where each mind works autonomously but not necessarily united, instead creating an "ideal copy" of the majority instead of their own unique vision.

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For those seeking the acid Wire are known for, the album bursts forth with it: "It's nothing new, hungry cats/ Getting fatter minds & thinner ideas." The lyrics bristle with references to a divided world, forces that seek to distort reality for their own nefarious group vision. "You are well-versed in verses, and chorus the chorus" from "Cactused" suggests we regurgitate what we are fed. The tension peeks out even in the most gentle moments, lulling the listener into a false sense of comfort, and in that lies the crux of their craft. Wire again reminds us how deceiving appearances can be, wolves camouflaged in the fluffiest of sheep wool. Wire could simply rest on their laurels and make a punk album, or follow the shoegaze crowd, but as usual they have done neither, choosing to lead instead of follow, hoping you'll follow along.

[Sound samples available here.](#)