

Brainwashed - Thisquietarmy x Away, "The Singularity, Phase I"

Written by Eve McGivern

Sunday, 15 November 2020 17:00 - Last Updated Monday, 16 November 2020 23:12



Montreal-based guitarist and designer Eric Quach (Thisquietarmy, Hypnodrone Ensemble, Destroyalldreamers, others) teams up with drummer and artist Michel « Away » Langevin of progressive sci-fi metal legends Voivod. That these two world-traveling Canadians crossed paths is tremendously fortunate. *The Singularity, Phase I* blends the immersive rhythms of Langevin superimposed on the myriad techniques of guitar master Quach, crossing musical genres to create a hypnotic and thrilling tribal experience. The expert ear of Quach, the practiced hands of Langevin and the combined musical knowledge of the duo bring to life a fruitful mind-bending soundscape of heavy motorik rhythms, prolonged drones, futuristic sound effects and frenetic improvised jams.

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No song is less than five minutes, allowing time for listeners to be grabbed by each piece's particular ambience, generally a flurry of metal and drone that frequently interjects kosmiche elements. Langevin's rhythmic creativity offers evocative tribal grooves, knowing exactly when to push furiously or break the moment with scattered rhythms, skillfully blending or gracefully opposing Quach's effects. Their expert chemistry resembles a murmuration of starlings that can turn and change direction at any time, while remaining coordinated in flight. Practiced, yes, but with raw energy.

"Alpha 0000 0011" is a beautiful example of kosmiche homage, built up on layers of a steady, simple underlying rhythm that allow Quach to overlay a dreamscape of ethereal guitar on top and building towards a commanding richness, to suddenly cut into silence. There is a terrific balance between guitar and rhythm throughout the album, and it can be difficult to know whose influence is greater on each track. "Beta 0000 0100" seems to be a track in which Quach serves as backdrop, providing a consistent drone while Langevin's rhythms and space electronics step to the forefront. The symbiosis is masterful, allowing each musician to build up with increasing urgency before Quach pulls back, allowing Langevin to showcase his magical drumming before seamlessly running into the massive closer, "Beta 0000 0101."

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The legacy of both is well represented, sounding vibrant and invigorating, nothing quite like Voïvod nor exactly like Thisquietarmy. If the song titling suggests an alpha numeric range of numbers, it appears there is more to come. "Phase I" of the title suggests that is the case. This is potent music to absorb, as well as be absorbed in. *The Singularity, Phase I* is an excellent beginning for what promises to be an incredible series.

[Sound samples available here.](#)