

Brainwashed - sam shalabi, "on hashish"

Written by Jon Whitney

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Montreal-based multi-instrumentalist and band whore Sam Shalabi has re-arranged the concept of collaboration for this one. Instead of the player in the ensemble, his role this time is of a maniacal mastermind at the controls. For this recording, he has solicited recordings from a number of friends on various instruments, cut up their bits and pasted them back into his own compositions.

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The result isn't remotely similar to the rhythmic, hypnotic, free-form other-worldly jams heard on Sam's Shalabi Effect album, but more of an improvisational collage, carefully constructed of loops and manipulated sounds. Rolling cymbals, tinkling pianos, multi-layered flutes, high-pitched ringings, field recordings and a repeated low-string color the 27 minute first track, almost like a tourist showing a slide-display from multiple projectors of various vacations. The sounds stay long enough to be identified and work into a comfortable synergy with each other, then move on, one by one, giving way to completely new movements which before long don't resemble previous or future snapshots. Just when a level of serene comfort is reached by the end of "Outside Chance," the blaring horns of the next track rush in.

"Soot," accurately describes this track, as what appears to be distorted guitar loops, abrasive loops, tapes played at wrong speeds, and intruding horns create a gritty, dark, and uneasy sound. As interesting as it is, thankfully it clocks in under six minutes. The album ends on the nearly eight minute "The Wherewithall," which returns to the ease while soaking the listener in a thick tape hiss. The tinkling piano returns, an unoffensive guitar taps out notes and all lights fade.

samples:

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- [Outside Chance](#)
- [Soot](#)
- [The Wherewithall](#)