

Brainwashed - Corridors

Written by Creag Dunton

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Originally composed for five channel video installations by artist Byron Westbrook (who has worked with the likes of Rhys Chatham and Phill Niblock), the four pieces that make up this album stand strongly on their own as a traditional two channel listening experience. Based upon a variety of pre-recorded and live sources, some of which were weaved together to create singular works, the results often show little semblance of their original forms and become something else entirely.

[Sedimental](#)

The four works on this album were all composed in distinctly different ways. The first piece was a live studio improvisation for trumpet, guitar and autoharp that was then mangled and processed live for performance. Opening with delicate, shimmering sounds and soft currents of tone, the piece eventually segues into louder, more commanding passages, but never becomes too much. Bits that resemble sustained notes on a violin or cello arise towards the end, but are obviously not actually there. However, what might be the forceful notes of a trumpet almost seem recognizable towards the end, but that could be a complete fabrication of my mind.

The second track is comprised of two different performances using only guitar feedback that are molded into a completely different sonic character, though at times the unmistakable squall of guitar noise seems to be irrepressible. The piece emphasizes the subtle elements of feedback, focusing on the hum that builds into noise. Undulating, rhythmic elements appear, as does an overarching sense of restrained heaviness...the intensity we all associate with a blast of feedback is there, but kept at bay like a wild animal.

The two remaining pieces were built from a total of five performances, all utilizing processed recordings of viola, organ, and found sounds. Interestingly, but unsurprisingly, both go in extremely different directions. The first of these two pieces has an overall more abrasive feeling, with crackling sounds and machinery like textures. It's quiet, but there is a consistent stuttering metallic din to be heard that slowly builds in intensity. Of the entire album, this is

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probably the weakest piece in my opinion, simply because it is rather monochrome and heavily focused on repetition.

The second, however, is the only one here in which the true sounds of the source material can actually be heard. Opening with a digitally reassembled passage of viola, it then leads into mostly untouched heavy organ sounds, with delicate strings to accompany it. The processing elements here are far more subtle: towards the second half it is mostly just used to stretch the more traditional tones out to infinity, creating an enveloping mass of sound that eventually goes out like a lamb, ending on the smallest of sounds.

While there is definitely an overarching concept of using and reusing live performances in a live context, this is a strong piece of audio even without any knowledge of how it was created. While personally I would have enjoyed being able to hear a true five channel mix of these installations at home, this stereo version is still enough to satisfy.

samples:

- [Track 2](#)
- [Track 3](#)
- [Track 4](#)