

reviews

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**various artists: urban renewal program ep**  
(ninja tune)



london's ninja tune collective collaborates with chicago's chocolate industries label for this blinding little six-tracker, mos def, diverse, aesop rock and rjd2 are on hand to get things moving sideways. opener mos def and diverse 'wylin out' is produced by prefuse 73, and mr.herrens' fresh backing really sets the pace nicely - his style cutting cleanly through the usual thick gloop west-coast style rap. aesop rock is up next with 'train buffer' - a mini epic of a track which is nicely paced and gets the old head bobbin'.

but it's all a build-up to the track of the ep - from a man i've not heard before - rjd2. 'true confessions' is a belter of a track, using modified heavy guitar riffs and interspersed with a young man confessing his sins to a priest. this particular element brings both humanity and draws the listener in, only to be blown out by the recurrent guitar onslaught - and even a little bit of spaghetti-western style whistling towards the end! the only shame is it doesn't go on for any longer.

to appease the more instrumentally-inclined of you out there tortoise are on hand with a thoroughly enjoyable workout entitled 'c.t.a.' - the most approachable work i've heard of theirs. but this works very well on this ep and ninja tune must be praised for this happy diversity.

finishing things off are instrumental versions of opening tracks 'wylin out' and 'train buffer', for djs to work with basically - ah, takes me back to getting excited whenever i saw a madonna instrumental track on the sports centre jukebox when i was little.

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**lemon jelly : nice weather for ducks**  
(xl)

lemon jelly are graphic designers. maybe the process of making music is similar to putting together graphic elements. hotch-potch, here we go...this looks good, doesn't it? the right amount of kitsch, the right colour balance - not too bright, not too moody. and no, no, don't be too emotional or too straightforward...we can't come around as sincere! we can't show any display of real emotion in this, it won't be stylish enough! wow, sampling peter cetera. that's real cool, innit? readers of the face will love it. especially those graphic designers.

jonas andersson

**hrk: break my code**  
(joint)

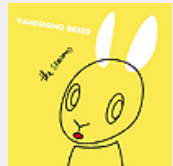


third in a series of three releases of remixes of rising j-pop star haruki. previously she had her work deconstructed by the likes of ulrich schnauss and thomas fehlmann. both were very successful in their individual endeavours and we're pleased to use our journalistic knowledge to inform you that this effort by the master of minimalism, thomas brinkmann, is equally as worthy.

surprisingly the full vocal remix didn't do it for us; the vocals seemed too high up in the mix. no, it's the 'lipstick' remix that really kicks. layering his precise non-sense technique against wafer-thin slices of haruki's voice and breathing sounds does the business. pumpin' and indeed, bangin' are two words that spring to mind.

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**vanishing breed: the seasons**  
(static caravan)



the solo guise of alex holland - 50% of the majestic they came from the stars, i saw them - this debut release strings four songs across two lumps of 7" vinyl. inhabiting a beautifully furnished halfway house between electronica and avant-rock, vanishing breed conjures up a subversive spell that is equally naive and evocative.

it's the whirling, gurgling sound of morr product slyly slipped into a blender by jim o'rouke and casino vs. japan. it's wistful music carefully crafted by a kid plainly obsessed with children's television programmes from the 1980's. it's yet another reason to swear allegiance to the rigorously off-centre, limited-edition religion of static caravan.

ian fletcher

**digital hassan orchestra: affairs**  
(erkrankung durch musique)

there is debate on what is 'electro' and what is 'electroclash'. ok, lets spit it out: electro is technological music; optimistic while frighteningly electronic, driven by a sincere love for machines and an almost childish fascination for the future and the infinity of space. electroclash is kitsch music; afraid of sounding too sincere or too frightening, driven by a base desire for sex, fashion and moshing in front of a sweaty performance gig. 80's metal riffs, dragqueens, punk. this is not for real, this is a fucking musical with a pretended german accent. cheap, and insulting to lovers of honest music.

jonas andersson

**kit clayton: when cedars fall ep**  
(soul jazz records)



stunning 12" from the ever prolific kit clayton. a-side 'humbaba' is what stevie wonder (instrumentally speaking) would have sounded like if he'd taken up the laptop instead of a piano. all warm, twisted funk asides against that trademark attention to detail in the percussion department. on the flip 'enkidu' sounds like a more elaborate sibling but is there just to show off mr.clayton's mastery of this music making malarkey. electronic dance music done proper.