

Want to [advertise on Splendid?](#)



REVIEWS | FEATURES | DEPARTMENTS | BOOMBOX | PODCAST | MISC

Aloha Index

SEARCH: **SUBMIT**

splendid > reviews > 8/17/2004



31 Down
Audio Dispatch 16: Noise Noir
Free103Point9

Format Reviewed: CD

Soundclip: "Crossword Mystery Hour #1"



is an art form whose time has come. I hope we see more stuff like *Noise Noir*, with even better execution.

It's nice to see media arts collective Free103point9 continue to release interesting, DIY-style projects that explore *transmission arts*, a genre they've coined to cover broadcasts (AM/FM radio, walkie-talkie, etc.) as a means of creative expression. The sixteenth release in their long running series is a live radio theatre project merging the traditions of 1940s serial radio shows with modern day audio explorations.

The concept is pretty solid. *Noise Noir's* main characters, Helen Tremble and Mike Sharpie (played campily straight by Heidi McElligott and Ryan Holsopple, respectively), guide us through the tongue-in-cheek script: Sharpie, a crossword-solving detective, obsesses over Tremble, a nightclub singer, while murder and mayhem lurk, apparently, in the background. As we listen to the dialog unfold (a small chore in and of itself), we're treated to the drama's simultaneous, ever-present ambient soundtrack. This comes in expected form: we hear a gale howl on a windy day, impacts of footsteps, creaking doors, etcetera. Unexpectedly, there are also periodic interludes by a rock band, on hand to add terrific tension (sludgy guitars pound incrementally as two characters discover a dead body in a drawer) during key moments, but also dropping brief fish-out-of-water intermissions between scenes. All the while, a nod to clichéd old-style *noir* flows through the performance in the form of steamy sax solos and beatnik beats (lifted from some obscure record, probably). Juxtaposed against the strange rock atmospheres and experimental sound effects (at one point, a squiggle of analog noise simulates a character slugging down his drink), this amounts to one strange, novel listen.

□ *Noise Noir* was performed in front of a live audience; you can hear the added din of crowd reaction (including some distracting coughs in one part). Overall, it's a fantastic idea, but something subtle is lost in translation, and it kept me from truly enjoying the disc on the intended level. I don't think the show was recorded all that well, for one thing. Tinny quality won't please audiophiles, but hey, this is a broadcast, and a *faux*-old-time broadcast, to boot. What do you expect? The lightweight storyline also takes effort to follow, much less care about. That said, this

-- Walt Miller

NEW AND NOTABLE:

REVIEWS:

- 12/31/2005:
Ladytron
Brian Chorney
Tomas Korber
UHF
The Rude Staircase
Dian Diaz
- 12/30/2005:
Halloween
PTI
The Crimes of Ambition
Karl Blau
Rosetta
Gary Noland
12/29/2005:
Tommy and The Terrors
Blacklisted
Bound Stems
Gary Noland
Carlo Actis Dato and Baldo
Martinez
Quatuor Bozzoni
12/28/2005:
The Positions
Comet Gain
Breadfoot featuring Anna
Phoebe
Secret Mommy
The Advantage
For a Decade of Sin: 11
Years of Bloodshot
Records
12/27/2005:
The Slow Poisoner
Alan Sondheim & Ritual All
770
Davenport
Beaumont
Five Corners Jazz Quintet
Cameron McGill
Drunk With Joy
12/26/2005:
10 Ft. Ganja Plant
The Hospitals
Ross Beach
Big Star
The Goslings
Lair of the Minotaur
Koji Asano

Splendid looks great in Firefox. See for yourself.



FEATURES:
Grizzly Bear's Ed Droste probably didn't even know that he'd be the subject of Jennifer Kelly's final Splendid interview... but he is!

READ SPLENDID'S
LATEST REVIEWS
on your PDA or
Net-enabled cellphone
CLICK HERE

DEPARTMENTS:
That Damn List Thing
& - The World Beyond
Your Stereo
Bookshelf
Pointless Questions
File Under
Pointless Questions
& - The World Beyond
Your Stereo

ARCHIVE:
Read reviews from the last
30, 60, 90 or 120 days, or
search our review archive.

It's back! Splendid's daily e-mail update will keep you up to date on our latest reviews and articles. Subscribe now!

Your
e-mail
address:

SUBSCRIBE!

[REVIEWS](#) | [FEATURES](#) | [DEPARTMENTS](#) | [BOOMBOX](#) | [PODCAST](#) | [MISC](#)

Alpha Index ▾

SEARCH:

SUBMIT

All content ©1996 - 2007 Splendid WebMedia. Content may not be reproduced without the publisher's permission.