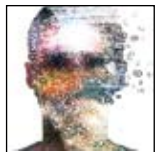


sound world which blankets the listener in darkness and cold, ashy snow. Opening track 'AAA' resembles a hostile, lunar atmosphere from Jon Pertwee-era Dr Who, while the desolate choir of shattered voices on 'OOO' are like dead souls floating down on a ruined wind. It's post-apocalyptic ambient music for a modern-day On The Beach. Yet there is a strangely soothing aspect to ALT also. Play it on the deadest and darkest of nights, and feel the isolating comfort of being the last person left on a devastated world.

EUAN ANDREWS

TOMYDEEPESTEGO

CHRONOPHAGE
(SUBSOUND)



The bizarrely monikered Italians Tomydeestego have their instru-metal down to a T on

their sophomore effort. Wasting no time whatsoever, Chronophage kicks straight into a series of long-winded, loud-quiet-louder dramatics and sometimes-heavier-riffs of Pelican and the type Russian Circles, for example, have been playing in recent times. It's not exactly bad, but the Roman quartet don't even *try* to do something different here, which for most people means it's yet another collection of Xeroxed instrumental post rock/metal. But for those whose thirst for Pelican-lite is still not quenched, Chronophage ought to do it, at least until the next band comes along.

ANTHONY BALAQUA

SLOATH

S/T
(RIOT SEASON)



Riot Season's dedication to uncovering the best and brightest among the UK underground has yet again yielded

fertile results in the form of Sloath, a five piece unit from Brighton whose explosive psych/doom as-

sault is made manifest in withering fashion throughout their debut vinyl release. Three extended tracks form the body of this combustible work. The bone-rattling riff of 'Black Hole' begins the album's descent, a sprawling morass of downer sludge that never quite lets you lose control even as you are cast further into its chaos, following the howling human echoes trapped within the grooves. 'Cane Trader' mines a loping Acid King-style riff for every element of viscosity it can muster, oozing from the speakers like a man-made corrosion, pores dripping with acid as each chord is torn asunder. The closing statement 'Please Maintain' is also their finest, conferring a lysergic swarm of guitars upon a simple ghost of a melody with astute timing of power and control.

KEVIN MCCAIGHY

TIM CATLIN & MACHINEFABRIEK

GLISTEN
(LOW POINT)

PETER BRODERICK & MACHINEFABRIEK

BLANK GREY CANVAS SKY
(FANG BOMB)



Two contrasting releases involving Rotterdam's Rutger Zuydervelt, otherwise known as Machinefabriek. Glisten is a collaboration with guitarist Tim Catlin and sound artist

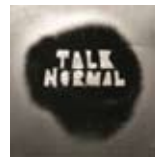
Melbourne-based Catlin providing initial recordings on mechanically prepared guitar which have then been edited, re-fabricated and sequenced by Zuydervelt. The result is a pleasingly stark soundscape of clicks and drones, an immersive experience lending the impression of being held within a cluster of vibrating metallic strings. Blank Grey Canvas Sky is a completely different proposition. Working with multi-instrumentalist Broderick, Zuydervelt's contributions are much more intangible here. A series of pieces involving piano and

wordless voices, there is a sense of deep, groaning melancholy steeped within this music, evoking a sense of vast, unknowable landscapes. It is hard to tell where the dividing lines between Broderick and Zuydervelt are, and it does at times approach the post-rock-lite of Sigur Rós, but on the whole this is an exemplary, if profoundly bleak, recording.

EUAN ANDREWS

TALK NORMAL

SUGARLAND
(RARE BOOK ROOM)



Armed with drums, guitars and voices, for their debut album Brooklyn duo

Talk Normal offer a contemporary update on the rumble and grind of NYC's early eighties underground, a kind of modern two-girl take on the driven dissonance of vintage Sonic Youth, Swans and Mars. Recorded by Rare Book Room owner Nicolas Vernhes with some assistance from Sightings bass player Richard Hoffman, Sugarland initially sees Andrya Ambro (skins) and Sarah Register (strings) shaking the streets of lower Manhattan with a hefty one-two combination of pounding percussion and wire-taut art-punk squalls. Bringing their onward momentum to a virtual standstill for a particularly claustrophobic rendition of Roxy Music's 'In Every Dream Home A Heartache' the rest of the record may take the pace down a couple of notches but it remains plenty powerful enough to keep your attention nailed for the duration.

ANDREW CARDEN

SHEARWATER

THE GOLDEN ARCHIPELAGO
(MATADOR)



Completing a trio of environmentally-themed albums, The Golden Archipelago

confirms that Shearwater's meditations on the natural world breed

beautiful musical results. Principal songwriter Jonathan Meiburg mirrors his travels to the Falklands, Madagascar and the Galapagos, by producing an album where each song is its own, unique island. Unsurprisingly, there are countless moments where musical effects mimic the natural. On 'Hidden Lakes', mallet percussion rains gently down on a placid piano figure, whereas on 'Uniforms' cymbals crash like the waves of a tsunami. That said, Meiburg's real success is to convey the tumultuous relationship between man and nature, and, on the aching intimate closer 'Missing Islands' this agenda shines through perfectly. A human voice emerges from the storm and whispers 'stars... bloom and recede in the day, and the air field is under the waves', bringing what is a breathtaking album to an arresting close.

JOE BARTON

THROATS

THROATS
(HOLY ROAR)



Throats' latest EP is nasty, there are no two ways about it. One might think that their success in

the past year, touring alongside bands like Rolo Tomassi and Coliseum, may have put them in better spirits but the 13 minutes of grind-infused hardcore on exhibit here are heaving with spite and venom. 'Wake' takes a sludgy approach to opening proceedings but everything that follows is relentless, taking the most vicious elements of crust and d-beat whilst retaining a punk sense of melody throughout. The production fits the music almost perfectly, capturing the technicality without losing any of the necessary grime. Whilst it isn't a perfect release, in that some of the songs seem far too cluttered or unfocused, there is a huge amount of potential here - and the possibility of an astounding full-length.

DAVID BOWES