

Brainwashed - FACS, "Void Moments"

Written by Eve McGivern

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FACS, spawned from the ashes of Chicago's Disappears, display a certain homage to early Public Image Limited paired with a reverence to Fugazi on their latest album, but visualize a version of both, pressed through a sieve of muted sonics and disaffected resignation. *Void Moments*

finds FACS' musical sound experimentation greatly expanded beyond their prior output. With a finely crafted blend of bleak minimalism, dark noise, and energizing rhythms, this work takes all the energy of recent experiments, honing the melodies into a deeper, darker, and richer menace of beauty and power.

[Trouble in Mind](#)

The album kicks off with "Boy," deceptively sounding like a simple take on nineties noisy post-rock, until about halfway when the sonic meatiness starts to engage. This merges nicely into "Teenage Hive" at which point the true flavor of the album starts to reveal itself. Noah Leger's drumming doesn't attempt to 100% match up with the rest of the instruments, creating an unease coated by a thick layer of discordant guitars, Brian Case's disenchanted vocals mired in the mix.

There is a sense of "void moments" throughout the record, as if meant to echo a sense of erased time in 2020, and Case vocalizes his disapproval, with the rest of the group displaying their displeasure through a controlled discord. "Lifelike" starts off on an industrial footing with the repeated crunch of distorted guitar, haunted by accents of atmospheric electronics, then launching into a chaotic flurry of Leger's drums, the void driven home by Alianna Kalaba's deep bass delay.

Closing track "Dub Over" is probably the most ominous thing I've heard in months, positively crying out for resolution, an escape from claustrophobic spaces. It builds from an atmospheric gothic foundation of muted guitar and distant, ethereal electronics, driven by a cold, staggered drum beat before being overshadowed by modulated vocals and wailing guitars before the

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guitar is left to sustain into nothingness. FACS often use the space between sounds to invoke emotion, and the space of void is echoed lyrically: "Are you sure truth is space between words / can you be sure it's what you want?"

Void Moments was engineered by the illustrious Sanford Parker, who has lent his touch to a wide array of artists spanning multiple genres—noise, post-punk, death rock, industrial, doom, metal, dark ambient and others—as well as being an active producer and musician, both solo and in other projects. Sanford is a master at capturing bands at their most visceral and raw, and his work here is no exception. At the closure of "Version," a track sounding much like a deliberate and chaotic replicate of an already zoned and drawn-out Morphine track, one of the band's members can be heard excitedly inquiring "Sanford, did you record that?" Clearly he did, with all the bands rawness captured for posterity.

[Samples available here.](#)