

## Brainwashed - SIMON FINN, "MAGIC MOMENTS"

Written by Jonathan Dean

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*Magic Moments* is the new album from Simon Finn. If someone were to have asked me six years ago, when I first heard Simon Finn's legendary 1970 album *Pass the Distance*, to assess the chances that such a thing would ever come to pass, I'd have rated the probability a big fat zero. Simon Finn was one of the many late-60s psychedelic folk and progressive artists that released one obscure album and then seemingly disappeared into the aether, never to be heard from again.

### [Durtro Jnana](#)

Original press copies of his frequently bootlegged Mushroom Records LP (which has only just last year been officially reissued on Durtro Jnana) have traded hands for insanely high prices, the inclusion of maverick experimental accompanists Paul Burwell and David Toop making it a desirable treasure, as well as soul-shattering tracks like "Jerusalem," easily one of my favorite songs of all time. Unexpectedly two years ago, David Late Tibet somehow dug up Simon Finn, who has continued to write music through the years, and has given Finn an outlet to release new material, as well as utilized his considerable talents on new Current 93 recordings. *Magic Moments* is a collection of 12 folk songs, Finn singing in his familiar, world-weary Tom Rapp-esque voice, accompanied on a few tracks by Joolie Wood on flute or violin. Because of the simple, unadorned recording style and the minimal instrumentation, this record doesn't repeat the same shambolic, psychedelic chaos that characterized his classic LP. This can't help but come as something of a disappointment to me, but I have no complaints about Finn's songs, which are deceptively simple, redolent of the best British folk, with cryptic lyrics pregnant with meaning and emotional intensity. Three tracks on the album are repeated from last year's *Silent City Creep* CDEP (now out-of-print) - "Walkie Talkie," "Eros," and "Wanted You," great songs all. Of the brand-new material, the title track is one of the best, a sad rumination on how human lives involve long periods of unhappiness, punctuated by magical moments that we carry with us as a salve against depression. Also memorable is a song Finn wrote many years ago but has never recorded until now, "Golden Golden," an apocalyptic war ballad that ends the album on a pessimistic note: "All our lives we're searching/to find a lord to crown/And Golden, Golden was our time/Golden, Golden truths and lies." This song is also one of the few times that Finn's vocals reach the throat-stripped ferocity of his performance on classics like "Jerusalem" and "Big White Car." *Magic Moments* is incredibly brief at only 30 minutes, but eminently listenable, and it's great to hear Simon Finn making records again. -

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samples:

- [Walkie Talkie](#)
- [Magic Moments](#)
- [Golden Golden](#)