

Brainwashed - Section 25, "Part-Primitiv"

Written by Creag Dunton

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One of the original Factory bands returns after a 21 year silence with a new album that captures the classic post-punk feel with modern day trappings. While some elements of nostalgia from that "classic" age creeps in, it still feels fresh, current, and fascinating.

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Part-Primitiv manages to up where the previous material left off, which is no small feat given the long break the band had. S25 aren't afraid to stick with what worked for them in the past, but do not come across as being stuck in history or unwilling to try new things. The angular, yet catchy, post punk is here ("Gene," "Cry") as are electronic based tracks ("Roma," "Power Base"). Some of the nostalgia isn't quite as welcome, however. "Dream" (one of two tracks featuring vocals from late S25 member Jenny Cassidy) is almost TOO deeply rooted in its techno pulse beat and club synthesizers, could be about any nameless late '80s/early '90s techno pop band. It's a good track, but it does sort of stick out as a time capsule of an age many would like to forget.

Other tracks take the vintage trappings and recontextualize them into a completely different beast, such as the New Edition R&B synths and hip-hop drum machines that are the building blocks to the punk pop of "Better Make Your Mind Up." Some parallels can also be drawn to early contemporaries The Fall, specifically the garage drums and crunchy bass-centric tracks like "Can't Let Go" and "Nick." Sometimes the influences are almost disturbingly blatant, like the bass line lifted explicitly from Joy Division's "Transmission" for "Gene" (though in this case meshed with a rockabilly guitar riff that makes us dance differently than "to the radio"). The more conventional pop tracks, like the analog synths and acid house tinges of "Poppy Fields" show what New Order should have done after *Technique*—all day-glow neon and Ibiza beach parties—while the electronic strings, acoustic guitar, and '60's pop vocals of "She's So Pretty" are pure foot tapping saccharine.

Maybe due to the fact that the core members remained the same from the early days of the band, Section 25 were able to rise above the unenviable task of writing, recording and releasing material after 21 years apart. *Part-Primitiv* is hopefully not just a reunion album, but the first installment of a rejuvenated career.

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samples:

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