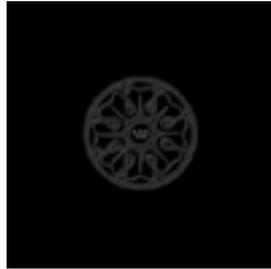


Brainwashed - Brighter Death Now "1890"

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After straying into realms of harsh noise and power electronics on albums like 'Obsessis', BDN returns to darker territory. The allegedly limited vinyl-only '1890' is a good example of a minimal record—how less is more.



The songs are called 'I', 'II', 'III', and 'IV', the sleeve is grey on black, and the record is heavyweight black vinyl. There is nothing to indicate how you should think, leaving the music to its own devices. 'I' builds slowly and steadily with stifflingly slow beats, under a wash of subtle analog vibrations that flicker around an appropriately eerie vocal sample, creating an intensely alien mood. 'II' continues to drown you in the same vein, although a bit noisier as the sound sources feel increasingly found, such as a metal chair dragged across a concrete floor. Analog frequencies sputter in and out, but they're always cold, until it all coagulates into a miasma of noise, deliberate beats, and muted cries of anguish. By the end of the side, you're broken. If you're brave enough to flip the record, 'III' starts the attack all over again. Whispers and growls from the murky shadows return over the slow pounding and drone, increasing your sense of anxiety. Like all great artists, Brighter Death Now excels at creating internal tension, so as the music progresses, it heightens and builds upon the sense of paranoia, fear, and oppressiveness it's already instilled. The last track, 'IV' rumbles on, seemingly incorporating bits of all the previous tracks into itself, a harbinger of the end. It's the death knell, as even the volume grows, and the low frequency bass grips you and begins to crush—the semblance of order breaks down as it echoes and pulses chaos. This record is damn good. Go out and find it. Play it, just not in the dark.