

Brainwashed - Aural Rage, "Svay Pak"

Written by John Kealy

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Consistently idiosyncratic, Danny Hyde's Aural Rage returns with an EP of acidic pop where he combines his trademark production with what could easily be considered mainstream vocals. This is easily the most consistent of his Aural Rage releases, relying less on recycling old samples and ideas by putting greater emphasis on melody and accessibility. Despite Hyde's focus on approachability, this is still wonderfully mad music reflecting his standpoint between the mainstream and the underground.

[Self-released](#)

Hyde's trademark wet and wobbly electronics permeate *Svay Pak*, these have been a constant part of his work right back from my introduction to him via his remixes of Nine Inch Nails through to his recent albums as Aural Rage. "My Children's Hearts Are Bleeding" has echoes of the sound he cultivated during his tenure with Coil but with a mix of other influences; a male vocalist brings an earthy pop vibe to the song while a female vocalist sounds like she has been drafted in from one of Ennio Morricone's more tender scores.

Out of these different strands, pop definitely is the word that comes to mind most throughout *Svay Pak*

. The opening piece "Sky Control" again sees a male vocalist (with a slight hint of the Marc Almonds about him) sing about paranoia and a lack of control over one of the best musical arrangements that Hyde has done in a long time. "Ernio Achieves a Happy End" has a rather dated, '90s feeling to it but I like it, it reminds me of the kind of music I used to listen to that acted as a gateway to the music I listen to today.

I cannot get fully behind all of *Svay Pak*, the song from which the disc gleans its title from,

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"Svay Pak Soliloquy," is a bit saccharine for me. It is a pity because the music is of a similar quality to the rest of the EP; the vocalist manages to complement the various layers of the song beautifully but I find the lyrics themselves to be a little clunky. I will probably get over it with more exposure to it and it certainly does not detract from Hyde's work.

Overall, this is without a doubt the strongest of Hyde's releases under the Aural Rage name. While I liked the previous CDs, they were a touch ponderous and could have done with little trimming. *Svay Pak* on the other hand sees Hyde being increasingly selective with his work and it is paying off handsomely. This is obviously a labor of love for him as attested by his dedication to creating individual artwork for each copy of this release (right down to a special Brainwashed review sleeve).

samples:

- [Sky Control](#)
- [My Children's Hearts Are Bleeding](#)
- [The Boom Boom Room Calls the Many](#)