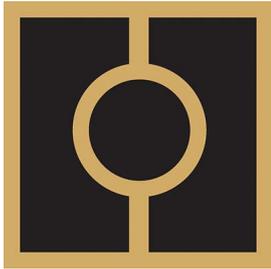


## Brainwashed - "EDM A2" and "EDM B2"

Written by Lucas Schleicher

Sunday, 25 August 2013 00:00 - Last Updated Monday, 26 August 2013 08:47

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Rephlex is almost definitely behind *EDM (Electric Dance Music) A2* and *B2*, but they're not owning up to it. Neither disc sports a label, neither comes with liner notes, and except for a few

[Jodey Kendrick](#)

[aliases](#)

, most of the 13 featured artists are unrecognizable. Alain Kepler, Rob Kidley, and Trevor Dags could be anyone, but with electronic music as hyperactive and acid washed as this, the first anyone that comes to mind is

[Richard D. James.](#)

### [Electric Dance Music](#)

Anonymity cuts like a double edged sword, especially for IDM producers or anyone else in the general vicinity. It drummed up a good deal of attention for [The Tuss](#) and [Steinvord](#), but the question of authorship can overshadow whether a record is any good or not. Unfortunately,

*A2*

and

*B2*

suffer that fate, if only a little. Nearly every song is exciting and memorable, and there's plenty of diversity here. Artists like Rob Kidley and J.K. obviously have some bubblebath in their blood, but Kepler, Heidi Lord, and Trevor Dags pull both records though smears of ambience and clubby pastiches that break away from the braindance bill. The familiar throb of drum 'n' bass shows up too, followed by the quiet sizzle of micro-sculpted dance and the analog hum of droning waves. Not everything inspires dance, but the title feels appropriate nonetheless.

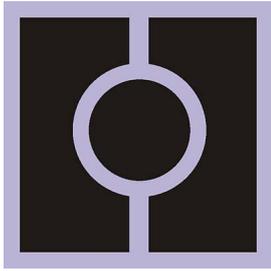
That variety makes it hard to believe that one person could be behind every song, but both discs play more like albums than compilations, and they flow into each other as if they were one album assembled by one hand. *A2* begins with a solid beat and keeps it going for more than half the album. Abrupt samples and distorted fragments cut in and out of the mix, and multi-threaded melodies criss-cross each other in jumbled chunks, but always in service of a syncopated rhythm. The songs also stick close to a four and a half minute limit, leaving an impression just by their blur of their movement. Repeat plays help to solidify the impact.

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In the last 12 minutes, the music mellows into a series of relatively low-key ambient shorts. That leads naturally into *B2*, which proceeds at a more relaxed pace. These songs rely less on glitches and more on instrumental color. A few are just electric sketches, others are longer, more hypnotic tracks, but they caress more than punch. The artists blend beat with atmosphere and toy with acoustic samples, and J.K. tosses a fragment of Bach's

[Tocatta and Fugue](#)

into the mix on a song called "Man Hunt 1"; I can almost hear him laughing behind it. By the time Heidi Lord kicks the second half of

*B2*

into full gear, everything's very cool, blue, and chilled out. The record is still playful, but it loses much of its dance-y flavor and drifts into more ambient, psychedelic territory. It ends in a much different place than where it began, but the shift is gradual enough to keep the records linked up.

Maybe old man A-F-X shows up somewhere in the middle, or maybe that's what Replex wants you to believe. Either way, it's a frustrating game. Whether or not he's releasing music is less interesting than the music itself. Does Heidi Lord have another record out there somewhere? Has TX81Z—aggravatingly named after a Yamaha synthesizer—produced anything else as trippy as "Googol?" Is Jodey Kendrick secretly one of the best electronic producers out there and the sole man behind this series? For now, nobody knows.

samples:

- [Rob Kidley, "Men Part 2" \( EDM A2 \)](#)
- [+10, "covu" \( EDM A2 \)](#)
- [Heidi Lord, "Heidi Kann Brauchen" \( EDM B2 \)](#)