

Brainwashed - Kikuri with Buttercup Metal Polish and Tom Tlalim

Written by John Kealy

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Masami Akita and Keiji Haino's collaborative project played the last concert of their three date tour of Europe in Geneva. Luckily I was in the city for a conference and could go see them (and had packed my earplugs in preparation). It was a memorable evening as they put on a monstrously powerful show that resulted in an epileptic fit, impromptu karaoke, a bottle in my face, and a sudden end to the concert and the tour.

15 July, Geneva, Switzerland

Buttercup Metal Polish are a pair of Swiss drummers who mix a Melvins-esque stomp with more emphasis on free improvisation rather than just a pummelling rhythm. They were joined this evening by Israel's Tom Tlalim who fleshed out their drum-only sound with his electronic gurgling. The trio worked very well for their half hour set; grinding beats broke away into fragmented explosions of manic drumming, all the while drones and electronic noise from Tlalim creating a vivid background for the drummers' spirited performance.

After a short period of rearrangement to accommodate Akita and Haino's set, the two elder statesmen of extreme Japanese music strode onto the stage. Taking things slowly, Akita held back while Haino released small bursts of notes from a flute like birdsong from some strange new species. As Akita started to increase the volume and the power coming from his brace of laptops, Haino moved to vocals. Deep throat singing being run through huge amounts of reverb sounded as alien as the pure noise being produced by the machines. The intensity of the performance kept increasing, obviously having a very real effect on one person in front of me who had a seizure and passed out (I must say the Swiss gig-goers were very quick to help him and he regained consciousness after a very short while, seeming to be OK which was good).

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