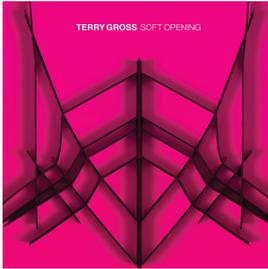


Brainwashed - Terry Gross, "Soft Opening"

Written by Eve McGivern

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The name Terry Gross brings to mind the NPR host. This Terry Gross is comprised of music industry veterans guitarist Phil Manley (Trans Am, the Fucking Champs, Life Coach), bassist Donny Newenhouse (Film School, Hot Fog, Buffalo Tooth), and drummer Phil Becker (Pins of Light, ex-Triclops! and Lower Forty-Eight). Where the radio host provides content with an impossibly calm demeanor, the musical trio present three heavy and kinetic tracks that serve up pulsating motorik rhythms, heavy sludge, driving bass, and intense guitars served up at mesmerizing cosmic volumes — all the while, pulling us listeners in with a constant array of melodic hooks.

[Thrill Jockey](#)

Soft Opening it is most definitely not, as the appropriately named “Space Voyage Mission” comes blasting out of the gate with pulsating, interstellar fuzzadelic intensity, diving into an onslaught of guitars before floating away into motorik beauty of shimmering guitars. Nearly 20 minutes of booming rhythms and guitar-driven melodic madness does not feel too long for this massive slab of heavy beauty. Manley’s work with Trans Am can be sensed, bringing a particular lightness and groove to the kraut-driven tracks, yet perfectly capable of metallic sludge. “Worm Gear” kicks off with persistent kraut beats and cascading, guitar distortion that finds all three musicians merging into a slathering of Sabbath-worthy heaviness.

Much of the album is instrumental, letting the instruments work their magic, but it is not devoid of vocals. “Specificity (Or What Have You)” finds the trio providing a united chorus over an incredibly catchy rhythm and a memorable bass line that ends on an explosion of fuzzed-out rock and roll. This is a perfect candidate for radio play, but as amazing as that track is, it doesn’t begin to serve as the pinnacle of the album, the other tracks masterworks of their own.

Tight play between guitar, bass, and drums reveals obvious chemistry between the three, honed over time with practice and experimentation. Just how much practice was required to achieve this near-seamless integration between genres remains unknown; there’s always a risk

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of such projects becoming one-offs. I'll go on a limb and suggest there's more to look forward to from this talented trio, each a component of the whole.

[Sound samples available here.](#)