

## Brainwashed - MV & EE, "Meet Snake Pass & Other Human Conditions"

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With some of their high profile release sailing to close to the perilous rocks of country-rock and general rocking, things have been a little rocky for MV & EE this last year or so. This live recording might not be as liberated as their journeys off the map free folk, but as a smattering of excursions through their back catalogue it is a fine listen.

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Recorded in Sheffield near the end of a European tour, the pair sound relaxed and fill the hall with the autumnal swell of their acoustics. The pair's babbling brook of notes shape "Cold Rain" into a perfect balance of song and winter breath smoke. Their gentle dishevelled playing turning into extended guitar runs, the blues pulled loose. Their choices here take a route connecting Delta phantoms and a stony set of grooves, the threads of their playing toying with plummets into psych paths. The most beautiful trail they wander is through "Anthem of the Cocola Y&T," a free-ish stumble bumble that adds a little dissonance while keeping everything above the waterline.

The only issue to take with the album is their predisposition to lyrical cliché, the standard word fuel of folk and blues is regularly plundered here. There's little difference between some of *Meet Snake Pass*...

and the lyric books of many other mimetic performers. Ending on the briefly sweet note of "Freight Train," MV & EE show their simple duo side is their strongest.