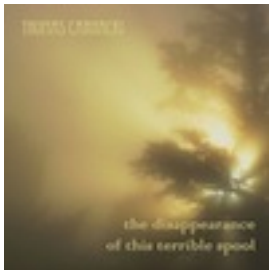


## Brainwashed - Thomas Carnacki, "The Disappearance of This Terrible Spool"

Written by John Kealy

Sunday, 19 December 2010 20:10 - Last Updated Sunday, 19 December 2010 21:23

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Gregory Scharpen's latest EP under the pseudonym Thomas Carnacki (named after the main character in William Hope Hodgson's series of ghost finder stories) sounds like one of those Victorian spirit photographs made music. Whether it is a trick of the mind or a psychic invasion, these four pieces unsettle and disorientate like malevolent specters.

### [Alethiometer](#)

Scharpen has served a tour of duty accompanying Matt Waldron in some of irr. app. (ext.)'s live incarnations and echoes of Waldron's neosurrealist compositions appear fleetingly during *The Disappearance of This Terrible Spool*

. The sonic experiments kick-started by Coil as Black Light District or on *The Remote Viewer*

are also given a look in by Scharpen. Here he attempts to open up listeners' worldview to the things that are best ignored; tapping into mental states that may tap back.

However, the music here is cut from a very different cloth and the weird moods of Hope Hodgson's short stories are more evident than any musical influence. Ectoplasmic tendrils form unfathomable noises as unknown machines creak, click and rattle. It is easy to imagine Scharpen recording this within his own electric pentacle. "Ecstasy, Vaguely Porous (A Palindrome)," a mercifully short and terrifying piece, looks behind the curtain of death. Pale voices writhe in a desolate ether, eternally alone.

I knew from my first time listening to *The Disappearance of This Terrible Spool* that it was something special but recently it has begun to encroach into my thoughts. Scharpen has managed to create something truly supernatural, avoiding any of the pitfalls or the usual clichés

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of “spooky” music. This is not an homage to horror soundtracks or a work of generic dark ambient music, this is a whole other world where art and the afterlife briefly touch.