

Brainwashed - Prurient, "Many Jewels Surround the Crown"

Written by Craig Dunton

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While many (including myself) associate the Prurient moniker with Dominick Fernow's abuse of distortion and feedback, the project has been shifting more and more into some hard to define realm that has slowly engulfed more "traditional" musical elements. Here that has taken hold even more, putting less of a focus on the harshness and bringing out a different beast of equal darkness.

[Hydra Head](#)

Opening with a scream and a blast of noise that harkens back to some of the earliest Prurient material, "Many Jewels Surround the Crown (The District)" at first is entirely familiar. However, much of the harshness pulls away in the first minute, leaving behind a rudimentary, but functional synth melody that develops and expands, offset by sheets of white noise and Fernow's spoken word delivery. The keyboard based sound is something that's appeared in previous Prurient works, such as *And Still, Wanting* and the *Cocaine Death* compilation, but here it's more fully fleshed out and structured, even soaring to dramatic, grandiose passages to close the track.

The "instrumental" version is far more different than simply removing the vocals. Instead, the synth melody is recast as pure black metal guitar and surges of noise. Hollow drums and more synths fill out the piece, but it's far closer to metal than most of the Prurient stuff I've heard, even if it's a bit too off kilter to be embraced in that genre.

It almost seems like two of Fernow's multitude of side projects, namely Cold Cave and Ash Pool, inspired the altering versions of this track. Between the synth heavy "The District" version, which wouldn't have been entirely out of place on Cold Cave's *Cremations*, and the

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instrumental side channeling the "kvlt" end of Ash Pool's metallic leanings, it definitely feels like there's some influence here. Regardless though, it still sounds more like Prurient more than anything else. Even if the lack of pure unadulterated harsh noise may alienate some fans, the drama and ambience created are its greatest strength.