

Thanks to everyone who voted in this year's Readers Poll. Once again you, the Brainwashed readers, have voiced your opinion on the best and worst of the year and the Brainwashed staff and contributors have voiced our own—occasionally clashing—opinions. All the best wishes for 2009!



Album of the Year

1. Matmos, "Supreme Balloon" (Matador)

"This is far and away the best record Matmos has ever released. Their signature cadence, abrupt editing style, and virtuosic tendencies are all present, but without a gimmick in sight. I've loved many of their past albums, but this one is more pure and potent." - Lucas Schleicher

"To me 2008 was year of the synth, where releases like this and from Four Tet and Bomb The Bass brilliantly exploited the sounds of the synth. This album is easily the cream of the crop." - Jon Whitney

"In my review for the album, I complained about the lack of a central conceptual conceit uniting the songs on *Supreme Balloon*. It's true that the album isn't as rigidly structural or conceptually playful as albums like *The Rose Has Teeth* or *A Chance to Cut*

, but over time it reveals itself as joyfully perverse and masterful in its own unique way. And it must be said that the 2xLP version is vastly superior to the mass-market CD version, both

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because of its beautiful artwork and the full complement of bonus tracks, which are some of my favorite tracks recorded for these sessions." - Jonathan Dean

"Matmos proves they don't have to sample the sound of ejaculation or use slugs and laser beams to make a great record. The result of their retreat from microphones is pure electronic bliss." - Justin Patrick

2. Earth, "The Bees Made Honey in the Lion's Skull" (Southern Lord)

"Dylan and the boys go a bit less country and a bit more gospel, and what results is a more diverse, more fleshed out take on the sound *Hex* started." - Creag Dunton

3. Fennesz, "Black Sea" (Touch)

"This is the first Christian Fennesz album I've loved from the get-go. *Endless Summer* took me forever to appreciate and his collaborations with other musicians don't exactly represent his typical output. "Black Sea" is beautiful, though, and is easily one of Fennesz's best records." - Lucas Schleicher

"Somehow Christian has managed to be both dissonantly oblique, yet craft some of the most beautiful melodies of any album this year." - Creag Dunton

4. Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, "Dig!!!, Lazarus, Dig!!!" (Anti)

"A much more enjoyable return to form compared to the disappointing (and dull) *Abattoir Blues/Lyre of Orpheus* release." - Creag Dunton

"I wish he'd go back to primarily singing rather than primarily orating like a preacher." - Jon Whitney

5. Deerhunter, "Microcastle" (Kranky)

6. Boris, "Smile" (Southern Lord)

"Boris goes even more rock, but I wish they would have stuck to the lush, more fuzzed out sound they started on *Pink*." - Creag Dunton

7. Fuck Buttons, "Street Horrrsing" (ATP)

"Much like breakthrough albums by Brooklyn noiseniks Black Dice, Growing, and Gang Gang Dance, the debut by Bristol's Fuck Buttons was experimental, exploratory and

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psychedelic in a way that was able to capture an audience well beyond the usual coterie of noise freaks. This record had its share of detractors, but many listeners who would not normally go in for structureless-ness, fragmentation, and effects-laden vocals were captured by *Street Horrsing*

, proving that experimental music has a rarely acknowledged potential to speak beyond its own, often narrow milieu." - Jonathan Dean

"Dancy noise even the *Pitchfork* kids can (pretend to) like." - Creag Dunton

"I completely don't get it. I understand the style but the writing is so boring, uninspiring, cliché, and predictable that I call shenanigans." - Jon Whitney

8. Nurse With Wound, "Huffin' Rag Blues" (United Jnana)
9. Deerhunter, "Weird Era Cont." (Kranky)
10. Thee Silver Mt. Zion Memorial Orchestra & Tra-La-La Band, "13 Blues for Thirteen Moons" (Constellation)
11. Autechre, "Quaristice" (Warp)

"Autechre keep popping up on year-end lists, but they keep releasing mediocre records. These guys are responsible for me loving electronic music as much as I do, but *Quaristic* is almost certainly evidence that they've passed their prime. It's better than their last two records, but it's still nothing to write home about." - Lucas Schleicher

"Well, at least the songs were shorter this time." - Creag Dunton

"Yeah BUT there's a lot more of them this time." - Jon Whitney

12. Burning Star Core, "Challenger" (Hospital Productions)
13. Grouper, "Dragging A Dead Deer Up A Hill" (Type)

"More voice, less haze, still bliss from Liz Harris." - Duncan Edwards

"This was easily one of my top ten most-played albums for 2008. The notion of yet another freak-folk songstress spitting out an album of reverb and delay-drenched songs sounds terrible on paper, but the album's submerged melodies and narcotic soundscapes won me over immediately." - Jonathan Dean

14. Windy & Carl, "Songs for the Broken Hearted" (Kranky)
15. Grails, "Take Refuge in Clean Living" (Important)

"Grails are on the chart twice, but *Take Refuge* is much, much better than *Doomsdayer's Holiday*. Its

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relative brevity, instant heaviosity, and epic hugeness make it the clear winner. Not that it was a contest." - Jonathan Dean

16. Portishead, "Third" (Mercury)

"Portishead needed to try something new and they did here. *Third* is their most adventurous and most diverse record, but it's absolutely in line with their previous work." -Matthew Jeanes

"A lot of people hated this record when it came out and the whole thing confused me the first time I put it on the record player, but it grew on me like few other records did this year. If it weren't for Beth's voice, I'd have never guessed it was Portishead. That turned out to be a blessing; plenty of musicians release comeback records that remind us of why they were great, but Portishead actually bothered to move forward." - Lucas Schleicher

"There was hype, hype, hype, hype, hype and then... a comeback album that was actually worth the bother!" - John Kealy

17. Gang Gang Dance, "Saint Dymphna" (The Social Registry)

"With this album, Gang Gang Dance went even further in the trajectory suggested by their now-classic album *God's Money*, experimenting with the structures and textures of dance-pop, HipHop and dub. Along the way, they might have lost some of their underground/avant-garde cred, but they've gained a whole new audience enraptured by their fractured, kaleidoscopic vision of 21st century dance music." - Jonathan Dean

"A horrible fucking record. Why the fuck do people like this so much after hearing *God's Money* ? They've moved backwards instead of forwards. Sure, it's accessible, but it's also predictable and horribly bland." - Lucas Schleicher

18. Atlas Sound, "Let the Blind Lead Those Who Can See But Cannot Feel" (Kranky)

19. Aidan Baker/Tim Hecker, "Fantasma Parastasio" (Alien8)

"Bristling, lush ephemera." - Duncan Edwards

20. The Bug, "London Zoo" (Ninja Tune)

"Kevin Martin got a little poppier with *London Zoo*, but the results are no less satisfying." - Matthew Jeanes

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21. Valet, "Naked Acid" (Kranky)
22. Philip Jeck, "Sand" (Touch)
23. The Legendary Pink Dots, "Plutonium Blonde" (ROIR)
24. Grails, "Doomsdayer's Holiday" (Temporary Residence)
25. Sigur Rós, "Með Suð í Eyrum Við Spilum Endalaust" (XL)

"How this record manages to go from manic and almost silly to downright morose in the span of an hour, I will never know. The first few songs will throw fans for a loop, but they also shed light on the band's humorous side that's been evident for a while for those who really wanted to listen." - Matthew Jeanes

"There was a time when I looked forward to Sigur Rós albums with excitement, now they're Coldplay in Icelandic!" - John Kealy

26. Bohren Und Der Club Der Gore, "Dolores" (Ipecac)
27. Flying Lotus, "Los Angeles" (Warp)

"High-tech instrumental HipHop for a generation weaned on Warp-style IDM and Adult Swim. Let us rejoice." - Jonathan Dean

28. Baby Dee, "Safe Inside the Day" (Drag City)
29. Growing, "All the Way" (The Social Registry)
30. Spiritualized, "Songs in A&E" (Sanctuary)
31. Evangelista, "Hello, Voyager" (Constellation)
32. James Blackshaw, "The Litany of Echoes" (Tompkins Square)

"The closest James has gotten to Diamanda." - Jon Whitney

33. Emeralds, "Solar Bridge" (Hanson)

"Counters any possible argument that 2008 was a sucky year for music." - John Kealy

34. Birchville Cat Motel, "Gunpowder Temple of Heaven" (Pica Disk)
35. SoiSong, "Soi-Jin-No-Hi" (Not on label)

"Ivan Pavlov of COH goes head to head with the formidable Peter "Sleazy" Christopherson; an austere electronic minimalist locks horns with a post-industrial maximalist. Unfortunately, the minimalist wins, and although there are moments of brilliance here that hint at better things to come, mostly these songs lack compelling momentum, and wear out their welcome." - Jonathan Dean

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36. Black Mountain, "Into the Future" (Jagjaguwar)
37. Stereolab, "Chemical Chords" (4AD)

"Seeing Stereolab live completely changed the way I thought about the band. "Chemical Chords" was just an OK record, but hearing the music live... that's a different story." - Lucas Schleicher

38. Kevin Drumm, "Imperial Distortion" (Hospital Productions)
39. Meat Beat Manifesto, "Autoimmune" (Metropolis)

"Swamped in trunk rattling bass, this is an album to roll out in your hoopty with. Only be prepared when the rims fall off, because that is when the gears shift into overdrive. Hydro-phonic scratches met blurred words before scooting me off into something dug up from the classic era of electronic tape music." - Justin Patrick

40. Paavoharju, "Laulu Laakson Kukista" (Fonal)
41. Diamanda Galás, "Guilty, Guilty, Guilty" (Mute)
42. Max Richter, "24 Postcards In Full Color" (Fat Cat)

"In Richter's hands ringtones are so not shit that no one will ever answer the phone." - Duncan Edwards

43. Mogwai, "The Hawk is Howling" (Matador)

"I found this record more satisfying than Mogwai's last couple of outings." - Matthew Jeanes

44. Boduf Songs, "How Shadows Chase the Balance" (Kranky)

"One of the most memorable performances at Brainwaves." - Jon Whitney

45. Melvins, "Nude With Boots" (Ipecac)
46. Benoit Pioulard, "Temper" (Kranky)
47. Jim O'Rourke, "Long Night" (Streamline)
48. The Fall, "Imperial Wax Solvent" (Sanctuary)
49. COH, "COH Plays Cosey" (Raster Noton)

"Although I think I prefer her as a guitarist, Cosey makes a good instrument too." - Creag Dunton

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50. Edward Ka-Spel, "Dream Logik Part Two" (Beta-Lactam Ring)
51. Machinefabriek, "Dauw" (Dekorder)
52. Sic Alps, "U.S. EZ" (Slitbreeze)
53. Nine Inch Nails, "Ghosts I-IV" (The Null Corporation)

"It sure is great having a NIN record without Trent's voice and annoyingly adolescent lyrics. More cinematic than anything else, the "Ghosts" record deserves to be on the list simply because it is the most extreme and experimental Reznor has been since he asked Coil and Jim Thirlwell to remix his stuff." - Lucas Schleicher

"Shockingly, Trent still had some good music left in him. Too bad *The Slip* lived up to its name in terms of quality control." - John Kealy

"Trent's better when he lets us more easily pick if we want his (albeit lacking) take on experimental, or pop/rock." - Creag Dunton

54. Ryoji Ikeda, "Test Pattern" (Raster Noton)

"It's like a punk band placed through a high-pass filter." - Jon Whitney

55. Throbbing Gristle, "The Thirty-Second Annual Report of" (Industrial)

"While a bit excessive (in concept and definitely in cost), it is interesting to hear the modernized take on this classic." - Creag Dunton

56. Windy Weber, "I Hate People" (Blue Flea)
57. Nadja, "Desire in Uneasiness" (Crucial Blast)

"Live drums make this band much better, which says a lot, because I've got much love for drum machines." - Creag Dunton

58. School of Seven Bells, "Alpinisms" (Ghostly International)
59. Venetian Snares, "Detrimentalist" (Planet Mu)
60. Wire, "Object 47" (Pink Flag)

"What a pitiful showing for the new Wire album. Sure, it failed to live up to the promise of 2007's *Read & Burn 03* and sounded more like a Githead record, but it offends me to see it rank lower than Throbbing Gristle's high-priced vanity release. It's not like enough people actually own a physical copy of *The Thirty-Second Annual Report of* to make a proper assessment."

-Gary Suarez

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"Sort of like a modernized take on the 1980s Wire, it gets better with each listen, though it still feels weird lacking Bruce Gilbert's obtuseness." - Creag Dunton

61. Bardo Pond, "Batholith" (Three Lobed)
62. Fire On Fire, "The Orchard" (Young God)
63. Hush Arbors, "Hush Arbors" (Ecstatic Peace)
64. Johann Johansson, "Fordlandia" (4AD)

"More music for Iconic American Names. Aches, swells, and bursts - in a not nasty way."
-Duncan Edwards

65. Nine Inch Nails, "The Slip" (The Null Corporation)

"Is it bad that I liked this album? Because I did. And I do." - Creag Dunton

66. The Black Angels, "Directions to See a Ghost" (Light in the Attic)
67. The Dead C, "Secret Earth" (Ba Da Bing)
68. Kemiälliset Ystävät, "Harmaa Laguuni" (Secret Eye)
69. Lustmord, "Other" (Hydra Head)

"This record is bleak and dense and always a welcome break from rock music." -
Matthew Jeanes

70. Sun Kil Moon, "April" (Caldo Verde)
71. Ascend, "Ample Fire Within" (Southern Lord)
72. The Threshold HouseBoys Choir, "Amulet Edition" (Threshold House)
73. Andrew Liles and Daniel Menche, "The Progeny of Flies" (Beta-lactam Ring)
74. Harvey Milk, "Life... The Best Game in Town" (Hydra Head)
75. irr. app. (ext.), "Aspiring to an Empty Gesture Volume 1" (Errata in Excelsus)
76. Torche, "Meanderthal" (Hydra Head)
77. Andrew Liles, "Ouarda (The Subtle Art of Phyllorhodomancy)" (Dirter)
78. Barn Owl, "From Our Mouths a Perpetual Light" (Not Not Fun)
79. Cloudland Canyon, "Lie In Light" (Kranky)
80. Fleet Foxes, "Fleet Foxes" (Sub Pop)
81. Nadja, "Bliss Torn from Emptiness" (Profound Lore)
82. Sonic Youth with Med Mats Gustafsson & Merzbow, "Andre Sider af Sonic Youth" (SYR)
83. Tindersticks, "The Hungry Saw" (Beggars Banquet)
84. Xiu Xiu, "Women As Lovers" (Kill Rock Stars)

"Best use of unlikely singer for a Queen cover in 2008 (Michael Gira on "Under Pressure")." - John Kealy

85. Hercules and Love Affair, "Hercules and Love Affair" (Mute)

"My favorite album of the years squeaks in at number 85. Hands-down the best contemporary disco/house record to be released all year, if not all decade." - Jonathan Dean

"Easily the most overrated record of the year. Antony's contributions are brilliant but the rest falls rather flat for me." - Jon Whitney

86. Indian Jewelry, "Free Gold" (Now We Are Free)

87. Nadja, "Thaumoradiance" (Archive)

88. The Alps, "III" (Type)

89. The Caretaker, "Persistent Repetition Of Phrases" (Install)

90. Dan Friel, "Ghost Town" (Important)

91. Library Tapes, "A Summer Beneath the Trees" (Make Mine Music)

92. The Notwist, "The Devil, You & Me" (Domino)

93. Deerhoof, "Offend Maggie" (Kill Rock Stars)

94. Lawrence English, "Kiri No Oto" (Touch)

95. Aethenor, "Betimes Black Cloudmasses" (VHF)

96. Aidan Baker, "Book of Nods" (Beta-Lactam Ring)

97. Excepter, "Debt Dept" (Paw Tracks)

98. Little Annie & Paul Wallfisch, "When Good Things Happen to Bad Pianos" (Durtro Jnana)

"Little Annie is the siren of the recession, and this is its soundtrack. Her uniquely delicate, damaged delivery on pop fare like Tina Turner's "Private Dancer" and U2's "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" transmutes the digestible radio staples into something meaningful and introspective. David Tibet deserves our respect for continuing to nurture one of the most talented and underrated performers alive today." - Gary Suarez

99. Mount Eerie/Julie Doiron/Fred Squire, "Lost Wisdom" (P.W.Elverum & Sun)

"Phil Elverum achieved an ambition to record with Doiron and the result is lovely, icy monuments to the human condition." - Duncan Edwards

100. The Magnetic Fields, "Distortion" (Nonesuch)

Singles of the Year



Vault/Reissue of the Year



1. Coil, "The New Backwards" (Threshold House)

"It feels very strange to call this a "vault" album, because though the demo tracks on which these songs are based are in some cases almost 20 years old, this album is unmistakably a contemporary work, using digital means to resuscitate a series of false starts and loose ends." - Jonathan Dean

2. Current 93, "Dogs Blood Rising" (Durtro/Jnana)

"Still as disturbing and creepy as the first time I heard it, just without the original bonus tracks, but the addition of a full-album reworking by Andrew Liles." - Creag Dunton

3. A Place To Bury Strangers, "A Place To Bury Strangers" (Rocket Girl)

4. Current 93, "Nature Unveiled" (Durtro/Jnana)

"While having these albums re-released with a superior mix is outstanding enough, the

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Liles remixes really stand out in my mind. "Nature Unveiled" has aged incredibly well, but hearing Liles reimagine that album was the real treat." - Lucas Schleicher

5. Sunn O))), "ØØ Void" (Daymare)
6. Mogwai, "Young Team" (Chemikal Underground)

"The dawn of the intense brooding sound of the seminal Scots." - Duncan Edwards

"When I was young, all of this was just fields and Mogwai released great albums." - John Kealy

7. Nurse With Wound, "Gyllenskold, Geijerstam, and I at Rydberg's" (United Jnana)
8. Nurse With Wound, "Man with the Woman Face" (ICR)
9. Matmos, "The West" (Autofact)
10. Sunn O))), "Domkirke" (Southern Lord)

"Beautifully presented and recorded, this set shows that O'Malley and Anderson are more than just two chords and infinite sustain. I think there's at least three chords here." - Creraig Dunton

11. Mission of Burma, "Vs." (Matador)

"The nervy, moody full length is cleaned up and given the addition of single & b-sides tracks, as well as a decent looking DVD performance." - Creraig Dunton

12. Psychic TV, "Force the Hand of Chance" (Some Bizzare)
13. Nurse With Wound, "Angry Eelectric Finger: Images/Zero Mix" (Beta-Lactam Ring)
14. 23 Skidoo, "Seven Songs" (LTM)

"Play that blueprint deconstructed Tibetan funk, white boy." - Duncan Edwards

15. Einstürzende Neubauten, "Jewels" (Potomak)
16. Nurse With Wound, "The Musty Odour of Pierced Rectums" (Beta-lactam Ring)

"For those who did not get one of the 300 CD-Rs of the original pressing, its transition to marbelized vinyl comes as a blessing. The artwork on the sleeve is vintage Santini, and when played the smell evoked is unwiped and unwashed, but in a good, dirty, way." - Justin Patrick

17. Mission of Burma, "Signals, Calls, and Marches" (Matador)
18. Loop, "Heaven's End" (Reactor)

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"The debut is cleaned up with added alternate mixes and Peel Session tracks, and sounds just as good as it ever did." - Creag Dunton

19. 23 Skidoo, "Urban Gamelan" (LTM)
20. Arthur Russell, "Love Is Overtaking Me" (Audika)

"The best stuff to be pulled from Russell's basement yet. Next thing we know, he'll have an album out documenting his ability as rapper." - Lucas Schleicher

21. The Residents, "Eskimo" (Mute)

"The eyeball gang at their (in)authentic best. Whale meat, again." - Duncan Edwards

22. Loop, "Fade Out" (Reactor)

"The high point of their discography benefits greatly from the new mastering, with some interesting alternate takes that have never been heard." - Creag Dunton

23. The Residents, "Duck Stab!" (Mute)
24. Sun City Girls, "You're Never Alone with a Cigarette" (Abduction)

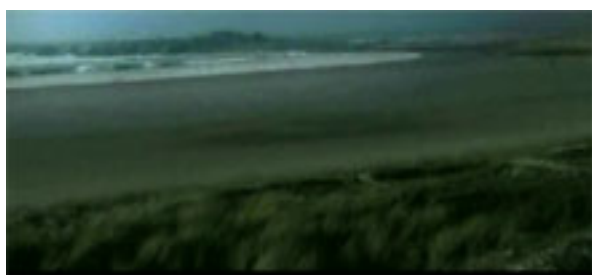
"Gorgeous and raucous. You missed the Bishops the first time around, but no matter, with more collected volumes like this to come this is just the start of a beautiful friendship." - Duncan Edwards

25. Jack Rose, "Dr. Ragtime and His Pals / Self-Titled" (Tequila Sunrise)

Boxed Set of the Year



Music Video of the Year



1. [The Legendary Pink Dots, "Rainbows Too?"](#)

"Videos like this remind me that more people need to simply pick up a camera and go shooting and couple the footage with music." - Jon Whitney

2. Hercules and Love Affair, "Blind"

"Pure sexxx." - Jonathan Dean

"The more I hear and see this video, the less I am impressed with it. Antony's the best part of the whole thing and the video itself is what? A portrayal of Roman decadence as seen through the eyes of half-porn and half-fantasy director? Right." - Lucas Schleicher

3. Boris, "My Neighbor Satan"

"Boris' most recent output has been awful, but this painfully boring video brings their sucking to a whole new level." - Lucas Schleicher

"This is my pick for Song Of The Year. Vacillating between eerie psychedelia and full-on Satanic majesty, this is Boris' "Planet Caravan". Stark and simple, the video masterfully evokes

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both hallucinatory hazes and death throes." - Gary Suarez

4. Mogwai, "Batcat"

"The video was fun." - Matthew Jeanes

5. Sigur Ros, "Gobbledigook"

"It's a sign of how Sigur Ros has changed for the worse - whereas before they had socially unacceptable subjects in videos now it's all about skinny, young, cute people." - Jon Whitney

6. Boris, "Statement"

"The band looks as bored as I feel when watching this video; the music is bland and so is the performance." - Lucas Schleicher

"Videos like these are the reason why I never check out videos anymore." - John Kealy

7. Antony & the Johnsons, "Another World"

8. Boduf Songs, "Pitiful Shadow Engulfed In Darkness"

9. Bomb the Bass, "Butterfingers"

"I'll never look at a synth the same way again." - Jon Whitney

10. Matmos, "Exciter Lamp"

11. Baby Dee, "The Dance of Diminishing Possibilities"

12. Bomb the Bass, "So Special"

13. Iron and Wine, "Boy with a Coin"

14. MIA, "Paper Planes"

15. Nudge, "Cymatic"

16. Stereolab, "Neon Beanbag"

17. Goldfrapp, "Happiness"

"I wonder if Peter Wolf has seen this." - Jon Whitney

18. Nudge, "War Song"

19. Benoit Pioulard, "Idyll"

20. Hot Chip, "Ready for the Floor"

21. Tricky, "Council Estate"

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"The video was ultimately more interesting than the song, but both made me feel anxious. For them to be over. It kept me listening longer than I would have with only the music though." - Justin Patrick

22. Hercules and Love Affair, "You Belong"
23. The Sea and Cake, "Weekend"
24. The BPA, "Toe Jam"

"Best use of censorship in 2008." - Lucas Schleicher

"Easily the video which most makes everybody's heads turn and gaze at. Maybe just to see if the bars slip up!" - Jon Whitney

25. Dillinger Escape Plan, "Milk Lizard"

Artist of the Year

(The winners of this category are calculated by the total number of points they received for all their entries in the poll.)

1. Nurse With Wound
2. Current 93
3. Coil
4. Deerhunter
5. Matmos

Label of the Year

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1. Kranky
2. Important
3. Matador
4. Southern Lord
5. Durtro Jnana

Lifetime Achievement Recognition

(As chosen by the Brainwashed Staff and Contributors.)

Merzbow

(Masami Akita)



"For many of us miscreants, the work of Masami Akita played some role in the development of

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our painstakingly esoteric musical tastes. *Tint*, a maxi-single from 1997 for the long-defunct Vinyl Communications imprint, was the first Merzbow release I ever purchased, essentially because of its low price. As a young college student hungry for new sounds, I initially found this jarring work to be, yes, unlistenable. Yet during this time I learned to appreciate and delight in the aural catharsis unlocked by Merzbow's wanton abrasiveness. Though his superhuman prolificacy often draws jeers and exasperated sighs from many, I have encountered many jewels (several practically at random) from his vast and growing discography, including his unparalleled *Satanstornade* collaboration with

Russell Haswell. From the sadomasochistic themes of *Music For Bondage Performance*

to the more recent animal rights sloganeering of *Bloody Sea*

, Merzbow has always attempted to infuse some sort of message into his releases, clearly to reject any detractor's claims of the meaninglessness of noise. For almost thirty years, this nerdy looking Japanese guy has been smashing eardrums on his own terms, all the while cultivating a following of fanatical consumers and appreciative followers. As lovers of difficult music, we all are all Mr. Akita's debt for the doors he opened, the artists he inspired/inspires, and the creative path he continues along." - Gary Suarez

"Merzbow has his ups and downs, his good days and his truly awful days. Yet this is all part of his longevity. Those crap, throwaway albums on obscure and forgettable noise labels are as much part of Masami Akita's appeal as classic albums like *Pulse Demon*, *1930*, and *Venereology*. His

music is all about no control and no holding back so it is fitting that his release schedule operates in a similar manner. This is why I feel that he is worthy of this award. He is one of the most singular artists in any realm of music. In a world where credibility is a meaningless term, Akita is a defiant slap in the face. That he is still making such intimidating noise after almost 30 years is remarkable, that we are still listening (and able to listen) after this long is incredible!" - John Kealy

"I will say that this has been a banner year for Merzbow. I've digested more than I think most sane people ever would this year but three of his releases this year, *Eucalypse*, *Dolphin Sonar*, and the Pinhas collab have easily been his best (and quite diverse within his body of work) since round about 2002, and easily filling up most of my top 5 merzbow albums." - Michael Barrett

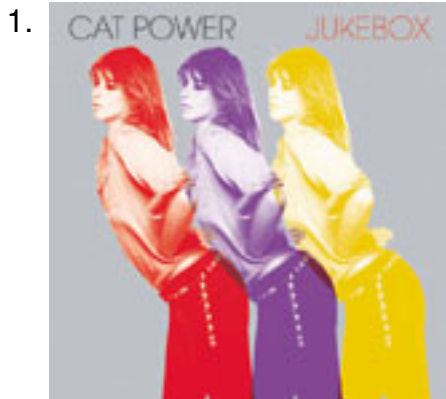
Worst Album of the Year

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These are indeed the losers, those who received the most negative votes from the poll entries.



Cat Power, "Jukebox" (Matador)

"How long can you release substandard, undernourished albums of cutesy postmodern cover versions, and play live shows that are famous for their awfulness, and still continue to be a critical darling and indie pinup girl? For Chan Marshall, the answer is thirteen fucking years. It ends now." - Jonathan Dean

"MAKE THE HURTING STOP. Her first covers album was fantastic, but did we really need two of them? And did the second one really need different editions? No. What happened to Chan? Please God, let her remember "You Are Free" and how awesome it was." - Lucas Schleicher

"Yes- this is bad. But I take comfort in the fact that recording two cover albums has probably prevented Chan from working on even worse original material." - Tony D'Amico

2. Motorhead, "Motorizer" (Steamhammer/SPV)

"I can't believe Motorhead are on a worst albums list. This will haunt me." - John Kealy

3. Von Magnet, "Ni prédateur ni proie" (Ant-Zen)

4. Eleonoora Rosenholm, "Älä Kysy Kuolleilta, He Sanoivat" (Fonal)

"The rest of the worst seem like perfectly understandable choices, but I am genuinely flummoxed by the inclusion of Fonal supergroup Eleonoora Rosenholm. Am I retarded? I really liked this album. Somebody please tell me why I shouldn't." - Jonathan Dean

5. Boom Pam, "Puerto Rican Nights" (Essay)

6. Shelleyan Orphan, "We Have Everything We Need" (One Little Indian)

"Really, readers? Did you actually hear this? It's pretty damn awesome." - Jon Whitney

Brainwashed - 2008 Readers Poll - The Results

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7. Norma Jean, "The Anti Mother" (Solid State)
8. Kingdom Of Sorrow, "Kingdom Of Sorrow" (Relapse)
9. Bob Mould, "District Line" (Anti-)

"Bob, come on, you're not Fall Out Boy." - Jon Whitney

10. Bauhaus, "Go Away White" (Bauhaus Music)

"Go away Bauhaus." - John Kealy

"Three albums that I thoroughly enjoyed this year (Kingdom Of Sorrow, Motorhead, Norma Jean) ended up in the "worst of 2008" category. Clearly I am out of touch with the tastes of the Deerhunter fetishists that make up our readership. Do you people only listen to metal sanctioned by Stephen O'Malley? Your loss, schmucks. KIRK WINDSTEIN RULES!" -Gary Suarez