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## THE FALL: RE-MIT - ALBUM REVIEW

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The Fall - Re-Mit' (Cherry Red)

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8/10

**The Fall release their 30th album and we get lost in its dark and strange world whilst dancing to those classic garage riffs.**

There is a panic among some Fall reviewers.

The band that get given no bad review has made an album that they don't instantly like and they don't want to give it a bad review.

And why should they?

The Fall don't let you down, even bad Fall is better than most bands can dream of and we all know that bad Fall is a Fall album you haven't listened to enough and that somewhere in that spiral of noise and ideas there lurks the genius weird pop that we love despite ourselves.

So what do we make of the Fall's 30th album?

Like all their releases it's oddly dependable- you know that in all that madness and psycho surrealism the Fall are a rock solid group who release the same kind of abrasive missives year in and year out like a production line of skewed songs that scrape against the sanitized modern world.

Firstly, album 30 doesn't sound too different from any other their others, despite obvious stylistic changes like the belligerent bass being dropped back in the sound and not leading the songs. We initially sulk about this for a bit because we do love a band with a big bloody bass running the show- always have done- since the Stranglers invented the idea of brutal bass and shrapnel guitars but the Fall have dropped the bass before and it hasn't been a total disaster.

Peter Greenway's guitar now runs the show and he has come to this fit-full table with a fistful of crackled and gnarled sixties garage riffs for Marquee to sprawl his inventive invective and imagination over.

Every riff is so damn catchy, it's like Nuggets on, er, acid as well as cheap booze and damp trucker speed and conjures up foul, cold winter afternoons in rainy day damp Manchester. It could be the sixties- it could be futuristic- god knows with the Fall- this is a timeless place.

The album kicks off with a killer zig zagging garage riffola of 'No Respects', which fades away after one minute just in case you were getting hooked in. 'Sir William Wray' is Fall single country with raw, distorted vocals over a catchy backdrop of psych shuffle as Smith sings of the 17th century MP from Grimsby (maybe).

There are nightmare moments like on 'Kinder Of Spine' that sounds like a man in the middle of a nightmare ranting against the landscape with the band seething with some kind of twisted Nuggets riff in the background and with Elanour's wheezing keyboard adding to the sick mêlée. It's here that Smith sounds at his most insane and seems to be shouting 'spiders' over and over in a lysergic rant.

'Noise' is like a mad eyed tramp staggering through lyrical shrapnel over a semi formed backing track- it really shouldn't work but it does quite brilliantly- Smith sounds like he is losing it but his sharp intelligence somehow still shines in the middle of the abuse and madness in the arena. It's not said very often but Mark has a beautiful voice and even at its most phlegm fuelled, tuff gnarl it still sounds great.

I remember 'Hittite Man' from the gigs last autumn with its sparse guitar hook that stumbles into the dense chord blockage of the break sections. The song oozes atmosphere and darkness like a rolling dawn, 'death does not exist' a defiant Smith growls over the twanging guitar and electronic backing- this is the stand out track on the album- the Fall were always great at these pieces. Only now they are skewered with a darkness- are the band and their singer stumbling towards some sort of end? Is there something mortal about their



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seething darkness?

'Pre MDMA Years' is cut up vocals and skeletal electronics- like acid house on er, acid, whilst 'No Respect Rev' has another killer sixties garage riff that is sharp and driving and the track bounces along like a Fall classic. This is one for the old bones to bounce around in the pit to- those intense old men with their furrowed brows and hatred for the world doing the do in the drunken rubble of the Fall moshpit.

'Victrola Time' is one of the pulsing electronic things they do so well, tying up the loose ends between that Suicide's electro pulse and a neo rockabilly that is based in the future with splashes of beer and nicotine stained doggerel over the top.

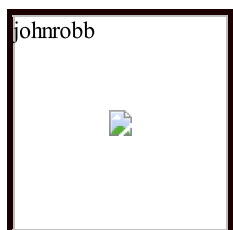
'Irish' sees the return of the bass in an almost swing time with the guitar squelching over the top like a strident rolling thing. Whatever Smith is saying in there makes some kind of sense- it's not so much off your bleedin' head as on your bleedin' head. 'Jetplane' is like a Grottesque era period rant about some kind of incident in Italy- there are mentions of rock groups and how Italians like their Sundays. 'Jam Song' is intimate over keyboard gurgles with same grumbling guitar action in the background before the drums coming crashing in with fractured beats- surprisingly hypnotic in its unzipped strangeness.

'Loadstones' ends the album with an early Beefheart beach party riff for Smith to fire his gruel poetry over.

Don't panic Fall fans- the album may take some work for some of you but it's yet another dense and strange world to enter and wander around in but with some great guitar riffs to guide you into the dense thickets of the Smith melodrama.

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Award winning journalist and boss of Louder Than War. In a 30 year music writing career, John was the first to write about bands such as Stone Roses and Nirvana and has several best selling music books to his name. He constantly tours the world with Goldblade and the Membranes playing gigs or doing spoken word and speaking at music conferences.

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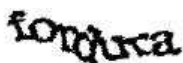
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