



(Cherry Red)

Whoa-whoa-whoa, etc! Don't ever underestimate [Mark E Smith](#), The Fall's founder, writer, vocalist and sole surviving member since they formed 35 years ago. Some may dismiss him as a past-his-best drunken parody of many former glories, and while live shows can be inconsistent to the point of umbrage, the hardest working man in showbiz is an agent provocateur and master of social engineering. His singularly eccentric shtick falls somewhere between Bernard Manning, James Brown and Polish theatre director [Tadeusz Kantor](#), who made onstage interventions an artform, just as Smith does.

After years of hiring and firing a multitude of members, today's Fall has reached an autumnal stability of sorts, with guitarist Peter Greenway, drummer Keiron Melling and bassist David Spurr surviving in the ranks since 2006, while keyboardist and Smith spouse Elena Poulou

probably deserves a medal on all counts for lasting a whole decade.

While best witnessed in the live arena, there's a vigorous urgency to The Fall's 30th original studio album, named, apparently, after the need to put on gloves when going out. The opening instrumental shards of 'No Respects' is just the sucker punch for 'Sir William Wray', a relentless chug of imagined history which Smith gurgles his way through with a ferocity rarely heard since 1982's [Hex Enduction Hour](#).

While sticking to a raw garage band template, the palette is broad, from the spoken word of 'Noise' and sonic collage of 'Pre-MDMA Years' to the slow-motion horror-flick psych of 'Hittite Man' and beyond. Lyrically, Smith is back to creating the sort of parallel universe narratives that fuelled his equally dark Hogarthian mythologies on Hex and 1979's [Droagnet](#) album.

While there are no real surprises here for long term Fall watchers, there's a more considered artfulness to the musical backdrop. Poulou's keyboards in particular burble with a fizzing insistence that suggests an inter-band chemistry that's familiar without ever becoming flabby or complacent.

Elsewhere on the web

[a Re-Mit \[VINYL\]](#)

Comments

Post a comment

Name Comment

To post a comment you'll first need to sign in:

Sign in

Email

Password

Remember

Not registered?

[Sign up – it only takes a minute.](#)

[Forgotten your password?](#)