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In Heavy Rotation:::

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## Ween (new release) **Shinola Vol. 1**

Chocodog Records CDR-1006 CD

Produced by: **Andrew Weiss and Ween**  
Engineered by: **Andrew Weiss and Ween**  
Mixed by: **Andrew Weiss and Ween**  
Mastered by: **Emily Lazar at the lodge**



Review by: [Michael Fremer](#)  
2006-10-03

"Tastes good on th' bun" are all the lyrics you get on "Tastes Good on th' Bun," the opening tune, of the Ween brothers' new collection of closet clutterers and leftovers. There's a tune called "Big Fat Fuck." Can you guess the lyrics? Close. Add "Feelin' like a" and you've got it.

This album is called *Shinola Vol. 1*. If this is their "shinola" can you imagine what kind of *shit* they're capable of dishing? Ah, but I kid the Ween brothers, who aren't really brothers but a weissguy from New Jersey and his weeny friend who go by the names of "Gene" and "Dean" Wean.

Actually this is a very clever record. A casual listen got me all the way to track 5, "Gabrielle," before Thin Lizzy jumped out in the chorus. Up until then I'd laughed at "Tastes Good On th' Bun" and found myself amused by the amount of musical inventiveness Ween was able to wrap around those stupid words. First and foremost these guys are really good musicians. Secondly they can be *funny* without being "ha ha." I thought "Boys Club" was directionless fun schlock and somehow (in retrospect) "I Fell In Love Today" just slipped by.

But having made the Thin Lizzy connection, when the next tune, "Did You See Me," commenced with a fade-up of a portentous mid-tempo strummed acoustic guitar, I immediately thought "Pink Floyd." The thought was generously rewarded by a recital of every Floyd cliché you can imagine until Emerson, Lake and Palmer emerged in the bridge.

These references were so purposeful, I wondered what musical connections I'd missed on the first few tracks so I went back to "Tastes Good On Th' Bun" and started over. If the tune means to allude to a familiar group I missed it, and the same was true of "Boys Club," though the vocals sounded like a cross between parodies of Michael McDonald and Ray Davies.

"That's pushing it a bit" I thought, as the song ended. But then came "Come Together," I mean "I Fell In Love Today." How could I possibly have missed what is unmistakably the beginning of *Abbey Road* that first listen? I thought to myself. No sooner did I say that, then it became a Spoon song! Now one of the Spoon guys definitely has a Lennon thing, but to hear the Weens channel both Lennon and Spoon in one tune, was mind blowing, whether they meant to or just did it by accident. And the more I listened to "Gabrielle," the more I heard Thin Lizzy *and* Elvis Costello.



The boys are back

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Not every song has an obvious antecedent, at least not to my ears, but on the ones that do it's more of a tribute than a send-up. Too much originality gets added to the mix for the song to be mocking. It's as if the Weens are taking another group for "a spin."

"Transitions" sounds like a cross between Steely Dan and Donovan, and then "Israel" jars you with heartfelt rabbinical seriousness in the lyrics and anthemic yearning in the melody that would make Ernest Gold *kvell*. Next to The Bee Gee's song of the same name it's rock's most pro-Zionist tune (unless I'm really missing something!).

Anyway, this is yet another entertaining Ween album and if you've not had the pleasure, you owe it to yourself. And if you hear Fountains of Wayne in the closer, "Someday," you're not alone. That doesn't mean we're right, just that great musical minds think alike.

Finally, even the sound is really good. If this is the "Shinola," I say, bring on the shit! However, if you can find a copy of the double vinyl of *Chocolate and Cheese* start with that.

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