

Ween - Shinola Vol. 1 / 2005 Chocodog / 12 Tracks / <http://www.ween.com>
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Everyone knows who Ween is. They just may not remember the band unless they are given a few tracks they did. Of course, their biggest hit in the last five years has been "Homo Rainbow", off of the Chef Aid soundtrack. However, they had quite a few hits in their own day, and should be considered to be of the same quality of acts like Bloodhound Gang and Lords of Acid. The way that "Shinola" starts out, the band has not lost a step in the last few years.

The slightly industrial sound of "Tastes Good On Th' Bun" mixes with slightly alternative guitars to create one of the oddest dance tracks of the last few years. The track gains a certain pop allure even though it is a pop curiosity in the same spirit as "They Are Coming To Take Me Away". "Boys Club" moves the focus back of "Shinola" from the current period back to something of the seventies. In fact, the track is so mired in the styles and sounds of that age, that the track could conceivably be the opening song for some long-forgotten seventies after-school show. Each of the subsequent tracks on "Shinola" brings to bear an entirely new set of influences for Ween.

It is no surprise that the band is able to come up with so many different styles, as Ween has been kicking around the whole band thing for over 22 years at this point. The tongue in cheek meets theme album aspect of "Shinola" shows Ween as an act that is fickle as hell; anything that works well in the track will be used. That is why a track like "Gabrielle" uses seventies rock and a heavy dose of Corrosion of Conformity to push the track into the stratosphere. This fickle nature also is shown in acts that the band has influenced over the years. For example, the way that Ween bounces around on this album is mirrored by acts like Momus and Gnarkill, to say but a two. The band may not have a track or two that individuals will immediately call to mind when the name Ween is mentioned, but all one needs to do is pick up this album and there is little chance that the person will not be a Ween-head by the end of "Shinola's" nearly fifty minutes. Find this album and be ready to get hit by some of the most interesting and complete rock tracks of the last five years.

Top Tracks: Gabrielle, Did You See Me?

Rating: 7.6/10

-James McQuiston
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