



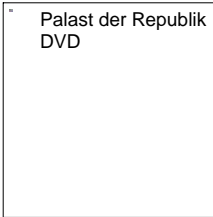
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Zero Mag for the Zero Decade

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Einstuerzende Neubauten

Palast der Republik DVD
MVD Records

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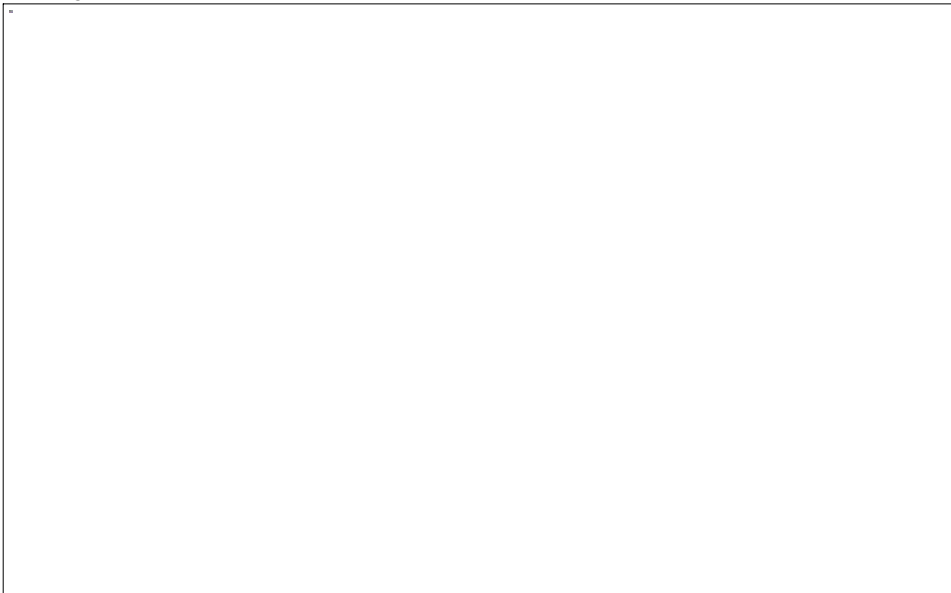
German experimental music. Who loves it? Who can't? Einstuerzende Neubauten, who since 1980 have been pioneers of the form, recorded this DVD three years ago at the *Palast der Republik*, the former East German Parliament building. What that's symbolic for is anyone's guess, but the several-member collective, fronted by Birthday Party and Bad Seeds former member Blixa Bargeld, makes music that is driven, droning, rhythm-driven and intense.

The songs aren't exactly songs, and they aren't exactly art pieces, but they're kind of a hybrid of the two...they kind of start and stop existing, and in the time between, there's a maddening, super-rhythmic churning. Its members perform in all black and barefoot (of course) but they turn everything they can into a percussion instrument, from industrial-size cans of food and gas to the steel skeleton of the building itself.

About halfway through, they use the entire 100-member crowd of "supporters" (remember: German and art-rock) as a single, united lead vocalist. It's a weird, compelling blend of nihilist, fascist and anti-fascist philosophy-cum-music, like a postmodern army band covering Devo. And if you understood that, you'll understand the Neubauten.

- *Matthue Roth*

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