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Up End Atom – A Tribute To Atom And His Package

By

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The first time I heard Atom And His Package was on the “Punk Uprisings Vol. 2 Comp.”. This was 97ish as you could tell by looking at the bands that were on this thing... Bouncing Souls, Lifetime, H2O, Lunachicks, The Boils, Nine Lives, Plan A Project, etc etc etc. But for me when I first heard it the song that stuck out was *Punk Rock Academy* by some band named Atom And His Package. I listened to it endlessly and it made its way on almost every mix tape that year. Eventually I went down to St. Marks to the small shop Go Kart Records used to run and bought Atom’s first album. It was just some kid with an annoying voice and a synthesizer but it was one of the punkest things I’d heard in a long time. At first listen you’d probably disagree. But to me punk rock was always about being yourself. Your weird ass socially awkward self. So here’s this kid covering The Misfits, Born Against, Fugazi, and The Ghetto Boys in ways that were wholly original. Here’s this kid breaking out into Eddie Money in the middle of his songs. Here’s this kid writing songs where he talks about getting beat up at a Deadguy show, dating a girl from a freakshow, wishing his friends happy birthdays, hanging out with black metal kids, working out to impress new age songstress Enya, admitting his knack for buying shitty albums, and wanting the United States to switch to the metric system. Here’s this kid not giving a shit what anyone thinks and doing his thing, however weird or uncool it was. Here’s this kid reminding people what punk rock is whether he knew it or not. I loved every minute of it and own everything he’s ever done since. When I read there was a tribute album for Atom I thought, why not?

“Up End Atom” suffers from one thing and that’s not having a ton of “A” name bands. Honestly I think they could have probably gotten some more well known acts on board for this thing. At the very least it would’ve helped sales. The biggest name on here is Atom himself when he guests on The Zambonis cover of *Goalie*. “Ok so I’m on a tribute record for myself” he starts. The first time I heard this I laughed my ass off. I was driving and almost veered into a playground I was laughing so hard. But that’s the charm of Atom and his music, it’s just a good time. Like goofing around with your friends set to music. Other highlights include: Yidcore turning *Avenger* into a rocker (even if Atom beat them too it with his band Lobster Mobster on the “Making Love” album); The Emotron adding a little black metal to *Me And My Black Metal Friends*; Zolof The Rock & Roll Destroyer doing *Happy Birthday Ralph*; and The Golden Bloom taking *Lying To You* into indie rock territory.

I’d definitely recommend this to someone who owns a bunch of Atom albums already, probably not so much for the uninitiated though. If you’re unfamiliar with Atom check out any of his other albums, and if you’re not feeling too adventurous I think there’s a greatest hits out to get you started.

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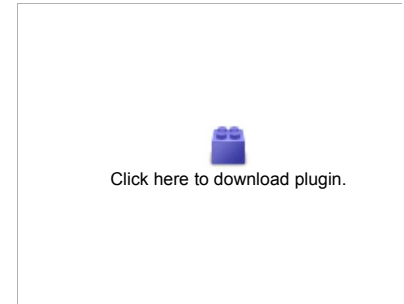


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