

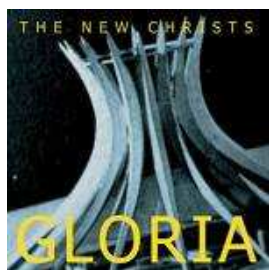


- Left of the Dial Magazine

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[The New Christs/Gloria: Impedance Records](#)

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As I have said before, talking about Rob Younger bands like Radio Birdman and The New Christs is akin to talking ‘bout God: I doubt my language has the capacity to describe them without seeming puny and contrived. As proto-punks, primordial rockers, and pre-punks all wrapped into an Aussie/American surf-singed maelstrom, they burned bright and hard, like one of Kerouac’s eager and antsy Roman Candles, except this one was fueled by barrooms and record deals that seem as distant as Vietnam these days. There’s no need to address their past: that’s been done by better historians. Gloria signifies their continued hammer-honed, rounded-edge but still powerful, brooding, driving, and instantly memorable tuneage. The best example of such fine subtle fury is the uptempo “My Existence,” wrought with enough guitar interplay and panache to keep you bitzkrieg boppin until the moon wanes. The slightly metallic thunder of “Try Something,” which asks (“are you related to someone I hate? are you falling into a filthy sleep?”) blunt questions, drills deep into the cerebrum. The slight syncopation, mixed with Younger’s unmistakable yowls, shudders and swaggers while dancing darkly. “These Reasons” offers more barely hidden desires for control (“does my logic frighten you!”), but even talk of pussycats and assassinations can’t bury the allure deep in the mesh of thick guitar and soaring melodies. The super-bass-fuzz and careening keyboards of “The Wheel” doesn’t feel as pregnant and promising, though it does pummel, while the stretched out neo-Western “The Posse” feels like plundered Clint Eastwood movies, in which the blue skies are bitten by rain, shredded by whistles, and weathered by no-way-out relationships. The pianos and horns find perfect places to loiter in “Psych Nurse,” a bit of rambling, jazz-burned, cocktail grunge for the uneasy and disaffected. I prefer the tom tom barrage and snakey guitar roil of “Animalization,” which burns hard and brief as he deconstructs how “truth has taken a backseat.” True to form, right in the middle there’s some surf music carnage, a garbled voice ten feet under the foam, and keyboards that put spin in your wheels. “Daddy’s Calling” is the closest thing to radiating radio rock: it’s a tough pull on melodic musings. The phased-out, bastardized, almost lunar (think Gary Numan meets Motorhead) rock of “On All Fours” keeps the album atomized, while the closer, “Bonsoir A Vous,” feels lighter, more offhand, and loose, a toss-off akin to the UK Subs “Party in Paris” without the hammy effects.

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