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SATURDAY, JULY 03, 2010

HeWhoCannotBeNamed - "Sunday School Massacre" CD Review (MVD Audio)



Sunday School Massacre (MVD Audio) is the debut solo effort from the (frequently naked) Dwarves guitarist HeWhoCannotBeNamed. This 12 track // 33 minute disc is a bit harder-edged and than recent releases from The Dwarves but it isn't that far removed from The Dwarves' core sound.

The songs are predominately guitar-heavy pieces where a number of songs build to a wall-of-noise (similar to early Nirvana). The Nirvana comparison holds in part with the vocals as well as HeWhoCannotBeNamed has a rough but clear

vocal style that is closer to *Bleach*-era Cobain than Blag's smoother delivery. The overall disc has a clean sound, courtesy of HeWhoCannotBeNamed and co-producer Bradley Cook (Counting Crows, Foo Fighters) and features Dwarves bassist Saltpeter on bass and acoustic guitars, The Fresh Prince of Darkness on guitar and Andy Selway (KMFDM, The Dwarves) on drums. Both Nick Oliveri and Blag Dahlia add guest vocals to a couple of the tracks.



Given HeWhoCannotBeNamed's long tenure with The Dwarves, it is no surprise that the lyrical themes are in the gutter. Lyrics for these twelve sing-a-long punk anthems range from the disc opener "Happy Suicide" (no explanation needed here), Dwarves style sexual themes ("Duct Tape Love" – "*greatest invention of mankind, the only way to make you mine*") to sci-fi ("Machine Boy"). The disc bounces around stylistically between grunge, punk and power pop but none of these style shifts are disconcerting. "Superhero" features vocals from Blag and could have been a Dwarves cut, "Duct Tape Love" sounds like a Ramones outtake and "Toxine" sounds like a sixties-style 'girl group' ballad. "Sinister Sal" is clausterphobic and psychedelic, like an early Dwarves cut and

"Wake Up" includes a rap break. ("*Get Stupid // Go Dumb // Ride This Yellow Bus with Your Zipper Undone*")

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HeWhoCannotBeNamed claims that the lyrics and title, *Sunday School Massacre*, were inspired by his experiences as a counselor/teacher with teenagers suffering from mental illness or abuse and that many of the songs were actually written while he was on duty at a residential treatment facility. Coming from a guy who faked his own death back in the 90's, you have to take stories like this with a grain of salt but it does make for fun reading.

Here's HeWho has revealed about the song "Machine Boy":

"There was this kid that I worked with when I was a counselor. I'll call him S____. S____ was about 13 when I knew him, and he had some serious physical disabilities because his mom's boyfriend had beat the shit out of him when he was an infant. I heard that the guy had thrown him into a wall when he was less than a year old. Anyway, it had seriously fucked him up. Both his hands were gnarled so that he couldn't really pick stuff up. His spine was out of alignment or something, so he had to wear some kind of brace. Of course, he wore big thick glasses, and before he went to bed he had to use a breathing apparatus with big tubes. And to top it all off, he regularly shit his pants so he had to wear diapers. Life had not been good to S____, but he was really a pretty nice kid in spite of all this. I noticed that S____ was really into reading comics. He especially liked superheroes, and I think he imagined himself to be one. One night I saw him getting ready for bed with his fresh diaper on, breathing through his big plastic tubes while reading some comic, and I wondered if S____ himself were to be a superhero, like he most likely imagined himself, what he would be like. That night I sat down and wrote most of "Machine Boy". I couldn't quite get the last verse though, so the next day I asked S____ for help. I asked him what he thought the strongest super power of all is. He looked at me thoughtfully for a moment, then said "I think it's the "Soul Burn". He explained that this is an evil power that goes far beyond just destroying your body, but gets completely inside you and burns everything else out. S____ actually inspired some of the lines in Motorboating as well."

Sunday School Massacre is raw, lewd and fun – the way punk rock was meant to be.

Links:

[HeWhoCannotBeNamed](#)

POSTED BY MIKE AT 9:31 AM

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