



SNOG. beyond the valley of the proles

hymen records. cd ¥730 / 2x12" vinyl ¥406. march2k3.

tracklist cd: bad planet, businessman, fill my hole, the master, welcome to adelaide, justified homicide, citizens, into the light, playstation blues, the fruits, waiting.

tracklist vinyl: bad planet, businessman, fill my hole, the master, welcome to adelaide, justified homicide, citizens, into the light, playstation blues, the fruits, waiting, citizens (shaolin wooden men "duty now and forever" remix), businessman (end "power-dressed for success" remix), justified homicide (black lung "executive delivery" remix), businessman (end "market correction" remix), the ballad (lightarmour "work will make you free" remix), bad planet (by the lamplight), fill my hole (under a full moon), justified homicide (fireside favourite), citizens (a subterranean glow), hooray!! (live from the verandah).

david thrussell's snog project has always been a meme complex - a series of critical cultural concepts that suggest an alternative worldview is necessary. yet the composition of its payload has shifted into a far more seductive form than it's ever been before.

once a harsh, post-industrial harbinger of the western world's cultural and economic imperialism, snog is now simply western. sorta. beyond the valley of the proles leverages the anthemic sagas of johnny cash, roger miller and johnny horton - the hard-strummed western epics of the 1950s - in turning out superb moments of social commentary on a post-pop chassis. in crafting an entire album of richly detailed western ambient and broken beat grooves, snog has raised the bar far above the confrontational, one-dimensional message music of consolidated or the sample-collage and noise terrorism of the beta bodega label. beyond the valley of the proles is electro-western manna for progressive political consciousness.

why snog is now all western and not the ebm or machine noise of the excellent 1999 album, third mall from the sun, is a long story, says thrussell. "the short answer is that beyond is where i'm at right now. i don't want any distance; i want the 'message' upfront - clothed with some sincere attempt at emotion and communication."

the message of beyond the valley of the proles is if nothing else a smoldering bitterness about the deplorable state of popular and socio-corporate culture. thrussell plies his maple-coated baritone voice - akin to leonard cohen, the the's matt johnson, or even the church's steve kilbey - over jangling western melodies and crisp percussion to decry mass consumption ("fill my hole") and soul-crushing careerism ("businessman"). "the master," with its strident low guitar and cavernous electronic ambience, will make you feel like you're in the front row of hell's main theater with johnny cash as the opening act. as on previous snog albums, there's one gem that always stands out, and on beyond the valley of the proles it's the stunning "into the light," an eloquent revelation of what happens when modern society's macabre machinations transmogrify human compassion into zealous terrorism and mass violence.

yet beyond the valley of the proles isn't all doom and gloom. snog's trademark satirical bent is well represented in "welcome to adelaide" and "justified homicide," both of which make mince-meat of the presumed moral rectitude of governments and laws and such.

to be sure, beyond the valley of the proles is pure snog: insightful odes with a healthy dose of humor to go along with the cultural criticism. beyond the valley of the proles is therefore the quintessential snog album - if not for the music than at least for its name. "a friend of mine said it was the best title for the album because he thinks i'm pretty much a cross between george orwell and an anarchic russ meyer," says thrussell with no small amount of glee, "which i took as a supreme compliment."

the vinyl version includes all cd tracks plus the bonus vinyl entitled 'your favourite electro folk swingers', featuring remixes by end, black lung, shaolin wooden men and others.

snog discography on hymen records. 02.2k3

**i snog, therefore i am... 2cd. hymen records ¥704. 1999
i snog, therefore i am... 2x12". hymen records ¥015. 1999
third mall from the sun. cd. hymen records ¥707. 1999
third mall from the sun. 2x12". hymen records ¥401. 1999
relax into the abyss. cd. hymen records ¥711. 2000
relax into the abyss. 12". hymen records ¥402. 2000
beyond the valley of the proles. cd. hymen records ¥730. 2003
beyond the valley of the proles. 2x12". hymen records ¥406. 2003**

**find more about snog on david thrussell's imcc site:
<http://www.worldwentdown.com/imcc>**

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