

# dusted



Dusted Features

Listed: Vol. 5, No. 4

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## Dusted Features

Dusted's Doug Mosurock commemorates the fourth anniversary of *Still Single* with reviews of City Center, Real Estate, Comet Gain and so much more.

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Welcome to the ... wow, this is the fourth anniversary of *Still Single*, isn't it. In 2005 I was concerned that there was nobody out there trying to stop the gaps between niche/genre zine coverage and the music press at large, especially when it came to the dozens of vinyl singles and small-run releases that were disappearing as soon as they were released. Sure, some folks get butthurt, but bottom line, there isn't as much historical throughput on these developments as there needs to be; on one side, you have these kneejerk bloggers who are so stoked to get free records that they dump instant praise on everything they receive, on the other hand, you have nothing. I'm proud to be able to present, to the best of my ability, a critical, balanced overview of what's happening down here, and not just because these are records by the artists who everyone will be covering a year or two down the line. And I'm proud to cover every record that gets sent in. But to make my life easier, you'll be seeing some changes coming – namely in guest reviews by folks whose opinions I treasure. How else am I going to get through a pile of over 200 pieces of vinyl? Starting in May, you'll get some differing opinions.

Also, you'll continue to see reviews, listening recaps and lists of records I've scored at <http://still-single.tumblr.com>, and you'll be

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able to keep up with the blog, as well as links to purchase new and limited edition releases, via the Still Single Twitter-feed ([@stillsingle](#)). Keep sending 'em in, we'll keep knockin' them out.



**Axemen**  
*Big Cheap Motel* LP  
(Siltbreeze)

First of three reissues by this forgotten New Zealand punk trio out on Siltbreeze this year, opening up the world to their scarcely-heard '80s material. The record of theirs I have, *Derry Legend*, is just as irreverent, but still sounds far more refined than the cassette release *Big Cheap Motel*. It's chaos, pretty much, of the Fall or Country Teasers variety; some guys who'd gotten their way into a big public concert, sponsored by the Big M dairy conglomerate, chomp on the corporate hand with a set of ten songs, all written the day of the show, condemning the company and its use of scantily-clad women to advertise its wares ("Can't Stand Up For 40-Inch Busts," "Our Sponsor Today," "The Pornographic Milk Drink"). Tinny, handheld recording paints a lack of means, but a surplus of defiant attitude by those who would kick sand in the face of big business looking to increase its profile on the backs of the downtrodden. In a modern era where several prominent countercultural press outlets have their own fucking record labels, where bands fight for the right to shill for Scion or Pepsi or RJ Reynolds, this is the sort of action that more artists should fight for. Their reasons could have been purely political, or just done for a laugh; both evoke satisfying reactions. ([www.siltbreeze.com](http://www.siltbreeze.com))

**City Center**  
*City Center 7"*  
(Party NGG)

[Pink Mountaintops -  
Outside Love](#)

[Prefuse 73 -  
Everything She  
Touched Turned  
Ampexian](#)

[Asad Qizilbash -  
Sarod Recital: Live in  
Peshawar](#)

[Alasdair Roberts -  
Spoils](#)

[Shogun Kunitoki -  
Vinonaamakasio](#)

[Omar Souleyman -  
Dabke 2020](#)

[Richard Swift - The  
Atlantic Ocean](#)

[V/A - Kitsune  
Tabloid by Phoenix](#)

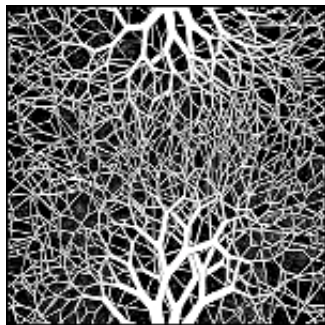
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Early Virtuoso  
Recordings From the  
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Ghosts 2](#)

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Lightly: A Tribute to  
the Giant Golden  
Book of New  
Zealand's Alternative  
Music Scene](#)

[V/A - Music Inspired  
by the Film Scott  
Walker: 30 Century  
Man](#)

[Sharon Van Etten -  
Because I was in  
Love](#)



**City Center/Grouper**  
split 7"  
(self-released)



**Grouper/Pumice**  
split 7"  
(Soft Abuse)

City Center is Fred Thomas (Saturday Looks Good to Me, Lovesick) and Ryan Howard, and their specific talents with pop music are put on display across half of this chain letter release. Working his guitar around loops and laptops, he comes off as more than just one of the first to acknowledge the post-*Person Pitch* era, and the sampler as a viable way of making indie rock. Their self-titled single is an interesting calling card, showing off slightly muted, hayzi shoegazii with some sweet sunset-witnessing cruise missile riffs acknowledging it all. It gets kind of glitch and computer-y in spots but you'll deal with it. You may not be able to take the straight up Panda Bear worship of the split's "This is How We See in the Dark," but then again, you might. It's a nice track, if a bit obvious, and certainly the brighter side of a split with Grouper. I haven't dug too deeply into Grouper, and would probably have to dock myself a day's pay to get what I'm told is her best (*Cover the Windows and Walls*), but I've got enough to listen to as is. That said I'm in full support of her efforts on these two joint releases. "False Horizon" (from the City Center split) has such a crucial high school art class feel to it, like a Goth girl sitting in the corner with an acoustic guitar and a heavy heart. "Rising Height," from the Pumice split, sounds like a refocusing of one-time Xpressway chanteuse Sandra Bell into world-fading, opaque sorrow. It's like one of the least cheesed out, most austere acts on Projekt (maybe like Black Tape) stripped of its adornments and forced to dig deep for the sadness, then rendered with the silty murk of a four-

[The Vaselines - Enter the Vaselines](#)

[Wisp - The Shimmering Hour](#)

[Ami Yoshida / Toshimaru Nakamura - Soba to Bara](#)

[Zomby - Where Were U In '92?](#)

[Hermas Zopoula - Espoir](#)

track. It's hard to focus through all these suffocating layers of ambience, but it's a good feeling, like ridding oneself of guilt. Stefan Neville of Pumice knows something about the murk, turning it into a warming agent for the atavistic, strummy hobo pomp-n-circumstance of "Twin Neck Double Kick Bum Chin" (think the Bishop brothers) and memorable way around a chord structure. He carries on long-held traditions of New Zealand music like a champ. 500 copies pressed of each of these (the CC/Grouper split is on "coke bottle" clear vinyl).

([www.myspace.com/partynogg](http://www.myspace.com/partynogg))

(<http://www.myspace.com/citycenternyc>)

([www.softabuse.com](http://www.softabuse.com))



### Comet Gain

"Herbert Huncke part 1" b/w "No Spotlight on Sometimes" 7" (Germes of Youth)

Brand-new, limited-to-300 Comet Gain single released on the eve of their upcoming engagements in the US. "Herbert Huncke part 1" finally sees David looking towards the Velvets as inspiration (as with "Mainlining Mystery" from the *Beautiful Despair 12*"), shambling on with hope and fire; "No Spotlight" aims for more contemporary ambitions, and is the straightest example of twee, sensitive pop I've yet to hear from a band that is usually caught up in between brash, melodic teen rebellion and more obtuse affairs. It's not the greatest Comet Gain single, but you'll probably never see a copy, so maybe it all evens out. Mine has "corrected" labels, as it looks like Germes of Youth did an overprint of an earlier title and made do with the extras. Always good to conserve.

([www.myspace.com/germssofyouth](http://www.myspace.com/germssofyouth))

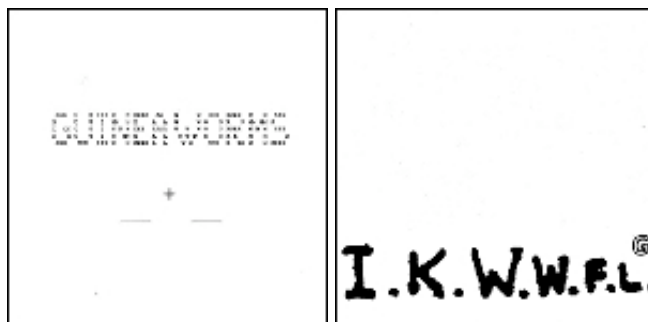


**Dum Dum Girls***Catholicked* 12" EP

(Captured Tracks)

Sturdy, if redundant, solo buzzsaw pop from one Dee Dee, a young woman from southern California. She's got the rudiments of guitar and drum machine down, and uses some primitive means to wring some valid feeling out of late '00s isolation. If you were looking for something that sounded like Siouxsie (or at points, Kim Deal) mixed into a Blank Dogs record, this is the sacred bonzer you've been lusting after. Smacks of just-realized skills and a somewhat cautious worldview that should bode interesting for whatever she does next (rumor is a record for Sub Pop, and a full-length as The Mayfair Set with Mike Sniper). First release on Sniper's Captured Tracks imprint, along with yet another Blank Dogs record and a bunch of things that have yet to arrive in the mail (Woods, Brilliant Colors and Mayfair Set 7"s, some tapes, etc.) Do with this what you will; the world is not going to stop if these releases remain underheard or underdistributed. Five hundo pressed, silkscreened foldover sleeve.

([www.myspace.com/capturedtracks](http://www.myspace.com/capturedtracks))

**Guinea Worms**

"Lost &amp; Found" b/w "Jeans &amp; Heels" 7"

(Savage)

"I Know Where Will Foster Lives" b/w "C.H.U.D." 7"

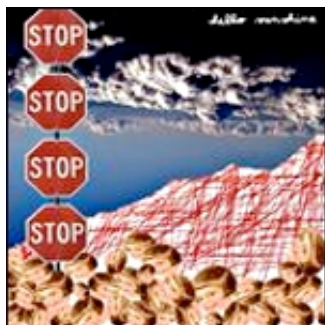
(Columbus Discount)

Four sides of the Guinea Worms, a Columbus, OH favorite of recent years, come to term with these two releases. Both "Lost & Found" and "Jeans & Heels" are guy rock, maybe lonely guy rock at that, but rock all the same, a big, unsteady mess of it, wobbling on toothpick legs and about to spill the Country Teasers discography (or pre-Are We Not Men? Devo) out the top of its bulbous head. The Savage single consists of two slow, long ones that definitely have Ohio stamped on its forehead, though the record itself apparently came from Sweden. I'm partial to the Columbus Discount one (yes, it's a Singles Club offering), which picks up the pace a bit. "I.K.W.W.F.L." reminds me of Bongwater! What are these guys doing? Best one of the bunch is "C.H.U.D.," pretty much what you'd expect: a jerky,

thumping take on the sex beat, complete with movie samples, the sound of purists showing up to work wearing Booji Boy masks. Cool times. 250 of the CDR offering, on red vinyl.

([www.columbusdiscountrecords.com](http://www.columbusdiscountrecords.com))

([myspace.com/guineaworms](http://myspace.com/guineaworms))



### **Hello Sunshine** *Hello Sunshine* 7" EP

(Les Disques Steak)

Rock duos are pretty stale, so if you're gonna do one, do it right: accentuate your strengths. Hello Sunshine, from Bordeaux, France, know that garage is sort of de rigueur from where they stand, so instead they create fast, frantic noise rock with lots of nods towards American hetero indie rock, with lots of bar chords and screamin'. It works out great, both of these sweathogs laying into these four songs and completely filling the space with overmodulated ferocity, recalling loudmouthed, give a fuck bands like McLusky, the God Bullies, or Clockcleaner. Here come the hotstepper. 250 copies with three sleeve variants.

([www.myspace.com/disquessteak](http://www.myspace.com/disquessteak))



### **The Intelligence**

"Reading & Writing About Partyng" b/w "Like Like Like Like Like Like Like Like" 7"

(Raw Deluxe)

"Fido, Your Leash Is Too Long" b/w "Shitty World" 7"

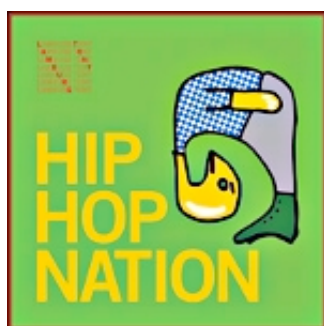
(Plastic Idol)

The Intelligence puts conditions at random intersections between tool & die post-punk of the '90s and a surfy/wavo garage thing.

Everything they do lately sounds familiar, from their last LP and this crudely-rendered pair of singles. You have to want to listen to a band constantly tweak its identity in order to get into them; maybe your life is in transition right now, so you can relate, something like that. The best song out of the four is “Like Like Like Like Like Like Like,” easily as good as anything INXS ever wrote. I mean that. This is their “What You Need,” and though it gets a little too weird towards the end, it’s a great example of what they do best, when they do it at all: a disinterested, syncopated, steady beat, some vocal barks, and most importantly, a swagger. I’m not crazy about the rest of them, but at least “Shitty World” is fast and sort of raging. Between 500 and 600 of each of these pressed; new album out in a month or so.

([www.plasticidolrecords.com](http://www.plasticidolrecords.com))

(<http://www.myspace.com/rawdeluxerecords>)



### **Lamburg Tony**

*Hip Hop Nation* LP

(Escho)

One of three non-alienating avant-garde albums sent in by Denmark’s Escho label, which a few years back made a little splash with one massive 10” slab by post-rockers Mit Nye Band. Lamburg Tony is a computer guy, rockin’ a mid-‘90s IBM Aptiva and running his sound shuffling/sequencing software from DOS. *Hip Hop Nation* has fuckall to do with anything involving the rap game, at least as far as the music’s concerned; think of it as a more rational, level-headed Bogdan Raczynski, more concerned with manipulating out simple loops and samples of already-weirded out music instead of overclocking a 386 and capturing the meltdown on tape. Tony’s assembled a fine mostly lengthy pieces of sound collage and dented tin can earthiness, low-tech Rube Goldberg-isms that wander around in the groove, acoustic layers and streams of hand percussion added to the logarithms as they develop. It also sounds like it could have been released at any point in between 1995 and now, a testament to technology’s Mendoza line with reference to the progression of electronic music. Might have more in common with jazz, actually, since that’s where the bulk of the source material seems to be rooted. Either way, it’s a fun, funky little 12” platter on nuclear yellow vinyl, unconcerned with trends in its microscene, and instead focusing on originality through the details of reconstruction, a modern-day

Raymond Scott winding up his clockwork. Comes in a cool embossed one-piece gatefold, with a poster, artist's statement, and signature.

([www.escho.net](http://www.escho.net))

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### **Mas y Mas**

*Proud Sponsors of Pepsi LP*

(Sound/Friends Network)

Proud, bitter DC residents Mas y Mas plow through this proper debut LP mainlining vinegar and spitting out hard truths to a generation that's had it too easy. Normally the hometaper w/drum machine and "This Machine Kills Grad Students" guitar is an easy thing to overlook, but Mas y Mas, a duo, pulls together an unswerving takedown of cocksure youth and the world of capitalism. I put this on just to see what was up with it and ended up listening to the entire album. I was really taken aback by the songwriting prowess and the overall confidence that this duo could muster over topics that could pretty much speak for themselves. At moments it seems as if the whole thing would topple over into Atom & His Package-style nerdery or Against me!-style largesse, but it never happens; this is closer to Psychedelic Horseshit, perhaps, but ... I dunno ... sane? Smart? Protest music returns to the streets. Get upset! White vinyl, lodged in a reverse-stock cover depicting what appears to be a man's bare ass, cheeks and crack slathered in paint, one cheek per side. We thank you for wearing a pouch, bro.

([www.soundfriends.org](http://www.soundfriends.org))

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### **Niagara Falls**

*Sequence of Prophets LP*

(Honeymoon Music)



I've spent far too much time on this one, and I feel depleted after these listens. Three guys with synths and some home studio skills from Philadelphia, trying to work it out in the studio with enunciated drone/ambient/longform psych exercises, all accomplished enough in the execution but just coming across as tired and with a lack of new ideas. Still, if you're looking for something that's content to run around the same territory that Agitation Free or Tangerine Dream might have explored almost 40 years ago, you'll find it here. It just doesn't get off the ground enough for me. Hilarious/embarrassing band photo on the back cover, blown up really huge.

([www.honeymoonmusic.com](http://www.honeymoonmusic.com))

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### **Onna**

*Onna 7"*

(Holy Mountain/Tlon Uqbar)

Surprise rediscovery of a 1983 single by Japanese psych dreamers Onna, finding kindred spirits in such currents acts like Ariel Pink, Gary War, or Blank Dogs, any of which could be reasonably extrapolated from Onna's languid logic. Two long-ish pieces build up an image of lysergic isolation, with honeydripping guitar dirges, wistful Ghost-like soloing (guitarist Michio Kurihara made his recorded debut with Onna, though perhaps not on this release), and high-register vocals across a layer of phased, Gothic bass and solemn drum machine. If you've ever heard Nick Nicely's works from the same period, this is very much on the same wavelength. Pretty great stuff, but specific, too; don't come in here expecting High Rise or something more punk-sounding.

([www.holymountain.com](http://www.holymountain.com))

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**Real Estate***Real Estate 7" EP*

(Underwater Peoples)

Jersey kids (including that Ducktails guy) keeping it a little more traditional here on their debut 7", with some ghostlike attempts at college rock, '80s style. Two of these three songs don't really get moving at all, shambling around some shifting chords on "Suburban Beverage" and waltzing alone on "Black Lake," but they still keep it interesting despite some puzzling arrangements which would have sapped the life out of other bands. They bop somewhat convincingly on "Old Folks," somewhere between Oxford Collapse and a very low-rent dB's. And that's cool. People like these kids alright, and with releases forthcoming on Woodsist and Mexican Summer, you'll be hearing more, and possibly better-rendered stabs at their sound in due time. White vinyl, comes with a pro-printed CD-R of the songs as well.

([www.myspace.com/letsrockthebeach](http://www.myspace.com/letsrockthebeach))

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**Secret Abuse***Violent Narcissus LP*

(Not Not Fun)

Dark, noisy, drilling, shoegazerly abstractions for guitar, obfuscated vocals, and multitrack recorder. The man responsible is one Jeff Witscher, and it's safe to say he has his setup pretty much sorted out. Angry waves of layered, distorted guitar crash down upon one another, sometimes within the confines of a melody (and he's a pretty good songwriter, even through the layers of fuzz, as evidenced in "Pulse," my favorite track here), and sometimes with no palpable direction whatsoever. At times it sounds like Skullflower attempting Hendrix's "Star Spangled Banner," with all the requisite weight and character. In ways I'm also reminded of an inverse Flying Saucer Attack, one which brings notions of pain and unease instead of calming and rest. Meant to be played at lease-breaking volume, so crank it up and watch your speakers glow. 445 copies.

([www.notnotfun.com](http://www.notnotfun.com))

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### **Social Junk**

*Concussion Summer LP*  
(Not Not Fun)

Personal, at times confusing statements offered forth from a young, drifting band that I believe originated in West Virginia. I'm less into their hectic, digitally chopped side and way more into their torchy, alienated singer-songwriter slide, sounding like they're about to slip into a narcotic coma on "House Fire (He's Still Dead)," buzzing, warped landscapes like "Depleted," or "Tunnels," which splits the diff. Draw comparisons to any number of free-rock blasters, from the Dead C. to fucking Poca haunted, and these three folks will rest comfortably in between. Originally released as a CD-R, and recorded over the past three years.

([www.notnotfun.com](http://www.notnotfun.com))

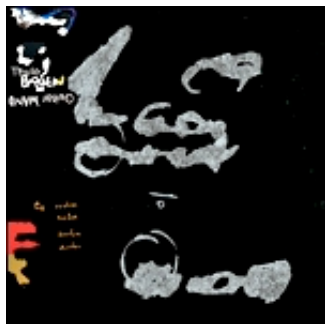


### **Teepee**

*Aware 7"*  
(Weird Hug)

Mopey but redemptive songs by a Miami area blankdogger. These songs go on and on and leave the phaser pedal plugged in the whole time, tapping out a timid rhythm and draping somewhat monotone vocals and jangly, rainy day guitars over them. Things get a bit too emotional for my tastes on "Mbiso" but I really appreciate the austerity meted out on "So Sure That I." He's clearly channeling Felt, as a lot of these kids are (unwittingly, I guess), and made me think fondly about all those old Bugskull records I have up on my shelf. Nice job, and I'm eager to hear some more. 300 copies (100 on clear).

([www.myspace.com/weirdhugrecords](http://www.myspace.com/weirdhugrecords))



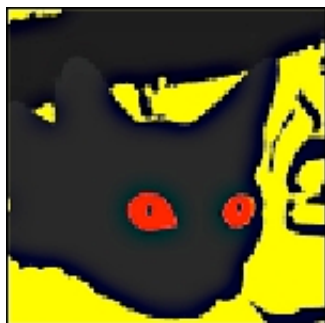
### **Thulebasen**

*Guitar Wand LP*

(Escho)

Modern pop studies for guitar and beats from this well-heeled Danish ensemble, exploring some of the various paths set forth by what can be accomplished with a late '90s palette of alt/indie sounds (touches of Blonde Redhead on "Blue Bone," Beck on "Riddletree," various tropes of Slabco, Anticon, and Black Moth Super Rainbow releases throughout), pushed through the sausage grinder that removes structure where needed. These folks aren't afraid to experiment, even when things are played out with an ear towards safety in pop. Uneven, overall, but the strong moments hold up. Odd record here, as both labels are hand-signed by the band, and contain stickers explaining some inconsistencies – apparently the [Mort aux Vaches imprint](#) of the Staalplaat label (who have a release out for Goodiepal, who's been mastering some of Escho's releases) had a hand in putting some scratches in one side of this record, and have taken credit for this action by assigning catalog numbers to them. Takes a while to process this one but it's definitely never boring. Much like fellow countrypeople Kirsten Ketsjer, they take a long way around doing something done before, and the excitement is within the journey. Comes in a very beautiful one-piece gatefold, with insert and poster.

([www.escho.net](http://www.escho.net))



### **Toymonger**

*The Nightvision LP*

(Deserted Village/Munitions Family)

Heavy drone/improv outfit from Ireland, flexing their collective

muscles on LP for the first time. I only tolerate the darker stuff that plays like true horror and not some dreamy, smoothed-out reinterpretation of same; you can sound cold, sure, but you have to find ways to distinguish yourself from, say, the ambient sounds of processing plants or the amplified sound of cars passing along a freeway. There is little evidence of such field recordery here, nothing more than a couple of guys who create a rotting, ominous sound borne of the cheap crap they shove into it; a recycling effort of sorts that gives out exactly what's put into a jumble of guitars set to hum, scrap metal, contact mics, and hotrodded electronics. Made to hurt, and it does; very effective bad mood music for a dark time. Wrapped in a silkscreened poster sleeve. Not for the squeamish; dark ambient from a very desperate-sounding state of mind.

([www.desertedvillage.com](http://www.desertedvillage.com))



### **Kurt Vile and the Violators**

*The Hunchback* 12" EP

(Richie)

Six new sketches (four of which are instrumental) from hero KV, definitely one of a handful of more recent artists I really give a shit about. His *Constant Hitmaker* album of 2008 was my favorite of the year, made by a guy whose natural approach to pop/folk/bedroom psych music, from several guitar-and-pedal-oriented directions, are all on equal, confident footing. This one's a moodier record, mostly made with his backing band the Violators. The obvious hit here is "The Hunchback," a dirgelike, dour crash of gales of half-regarded, stately jangle into a pile of shakers and tambourines. It's a three-chord wander, topping out the mono-chord raga of "Good Lookin Out," and it could also pass for a lost shoegaze classic of '92. There's some tossed-off studio exercises in here that give credence to the two song-oriented pieces, pinhole photographs of whatever this guy's going to dish out on his next full-length. First of three new releases by Mr. Vile, with a new 7" on Skulltones and a mix of earlier and current material on the Mexican Summer LP *God Is Saying This to You*. Richie probably pressed like 500 of these, so hurry up.

([testostertunes.blogspot.com](http://testostertunes.blogspot.com))

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### **Walls**

*Walls* one-sided 12" EP

### (Iron Lung)

Everything that the Walls LP wasn't, this is. The well-meaning nth-generation Midwestern noise rock leftovers from this Seattle band's earlier effort get dragged up a hill at top speed as Walls discovers its full potential: still a feel-bad band, but now imbued with a sense of purpose; they can bring the listener down, but they can also take them down any way they see fit. I'm glad they shook out the complacency and went for it, as these six songs can look eye-to-eye with the peaks these guys hit as Cold Sweat. Other moments remind me of a really ballsy Dead and Gone. Chaotic, explosive modern hardcore, played with all the frustration this world can create. 1000 copies, following a tour pressing of 200, with excellent artwork – minimal on the sleeve, gnarly on the insert, and all “YEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH!”’s captured for posterity on the lyric sheet. Perfect soundtrack for strength training. ([www.myspace.com/lifeironlungdeath](http://www.myspace.com/lifeironlungdeath))

By Doug Mosurock

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