

"Peace On You" and Leroy Jenkins's "Albert Ayler (His Life Was Too Short)" – provide the album's emotional fulcrum, both rendered as lustrous elegies swelling with richly bowed cello. Other pieces allow for divergent strategies: "Serene And Playful" is just that, with translucent cello harmonics and delicate piano chordings gathering carefree momentum; the title track matches Reid's stabs and lurches with Hawkins's crabbed clusters; while, on "Danced Together", Hawkins injects quicksilver abstraction with irresistible flashes of joyful exultation.

**François Houle 4**  
*Recorder*

Songlines CD/DL  
One reason why Canadian clarinetist François Houle's compositions roar with such fierce and indefatigable energy lies in the personnel and instrumentation he's assembled to play them. His tone is sweet and bird-like, looping and soaring in lithe parabolas while Gordon Grdina's electric guitar is cranked and scuzzy, frequently breaking away from neatly stated odd couple unison themes to mutter a foul-tempered Adderall monologue. Meanwhile, bassist Mark Helias and drummer Gerry Hemingway bristle with bullish muscularity: on "The Black Bird", they set up a beefy free-bop on which clarinet and guitar zigzag like rival downhill skiers, while "Canyamel" finds them sliding into a heavy blues shuffle that elicits a stinging guitar solo. Brief palate-cleansing clarinet duet interludes by Houle and Helias keep proceedings fresh throughout.

— Daniel Spicer

**Metametal**  
*Desgasta Meseta*

Ediciones Casablanca DL/MC  
Every track on this tape by the Madrid based Metametal uses the same basic recipe, combining two simple ingredients seemingly pinched from Terry Riley. First, take a repeating loop of ambient noise – not unlike the first part of Riley's 1965 tape work *Bird Of Paradise*. Feel free to vary the loops so that you have rounded, globular dollops in one track and ascending heavenly waves in the next – and add kosmische whooshes, angelic choir and flickering guitar slivers. Then fold in the occasional plaintive bleat from a heavily treated saxophone dripping in echo delay, overlapping itself in a way reminiscent of the soprano in Riley's *A Rainbow In Curved Air*. If you're feeling cheeky, see if you can stretch it out to a whole album.

**Thurston Moore/John Edwards/Terry Day/John Butcher/Steve Beresford**  
*Stovelit Lines*

Bandcamp DL  
**Steve Beresford/Crystabel Riley/Tasos Stamou/Douglas Benford**  
*Ceaseless Wonders*  
Bandcamp DL  
Imagine a classroom full of gifted primary school children improvising a soundtrack

to a lost *Quatermass* sci-fi shocker and you'll have a reasonable inkling of how *Ceaseless Wonders* sounds. A snare drum is roughly handled, an accordion vaguely wheezes, a xylophone transmits scattered pings, pan lids clatter equine percussion, a swanee whistle swoons, while curt blasts of feedback and juddering noise provide a tentative sense of narrative. At one point an oblivious bro can be heard loudly airing his opinions in the background. No chance of that on *Stovelit Lines*, a much louder and, in some ways, more conventional set on which Steve Beresford swaps the little instruments for piano, sketching splayed chords and ripples that point towards a free jazz setting. Thurston Moore's guitar proffers queasy lunges and brittle droplets while John Butcher cuts through John Edwards's grinding arco and Terry Day's pattering brushes with foghorn tenor growls and prancing soprano trills.

**Okuden Quartet: Mat Walerian/Matthew Shipp/William Parker/Hamid Drake**

*Every Dog Has Its Day But It Doesn't Matter Because Fat Cat Is Getting Fatter*  
ESP-Disk' 2xCD/DL  
It would be difficult to release a bad album with three of the heaviest US jazz heavyweights on your team. That's the position saxophonist and woodwind player Mat Walerian has created for himself and, sure enough, his latest set is satisfyingly deep. At times – like when William Parker is locked into a vamp with Matthew Shipp dropping chords like depth charges into a bottomless trench – one is reminded of some of the elemental jams on David S Ware's *Live In The World*. There's a similarly epic feel to much of this session, recorded in a Brooklyn studio but with a certain cavernous quality that, combined with Walerian's murky bass clarinet, makes the whole thing feel like a dark, transporting dream.

**Skeltr**  
*Dorje*

Ubuntu CD/DL  
Didn't Derek Bailey once say that if you're playing the saxophone, you're playing jazz? Thank heavens he was spared the indignity of being proven wrong by this vapid, gleaming abomination from Manchester. Sam Healey plays sax and synths, offering airbrushed funk and rockish pomp, while drummer Craig Hanson lays out heavily syncopated broken beats. There's a tune with a nu soul vocal caterwaul and another with a toothless rap. But it's Healey's solos that really tip it over the edge: unpleasantly soulless displays of earnest seriousness in which you can actually hear him straining to experience a genuine emotion. Opening track "Cheef Beef" is a gruesome simulacrum of rave with a bludgeoning 4/4 kick drum and multitracked Jacob Collier-style vocal blandishments. Avoid at all costs. □

**Noise, Industrial & Beyond by Emily Pothast**

**Astral Social Club**  
*ACID BARF*

Takuroku DL  
A pulsating quasar of creative energy has long emanated from UK underground luminary Neil Campbell, manifesting itself in improvisations, fruitful collaborations, and his prolific, shapeshifting work as Astral Social Club. His latest instalment *ACID BARF* is a multidimensional cascade of twinkling synths and squicking sequencers oozing from a resolutely loopy groove. A single long track released on London Cafe Oto's in-house Takuroku imprint, it's simultaneously a flashback to early 2010s psychoactive experimentalism and a flash-now to 2020s acid-damaged dystopia. The perfect soundtrack for the morning after a night that might never end.

**CPI**

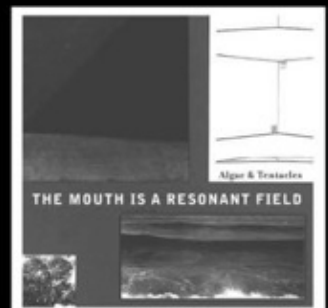
*Alianza*  
Hivern Discs DL/LP  
*Alianza* is a moody, emotional album that gently traverses a diverse array of contemplative tones and timbres. The first full length from Barcelona duo Marc Piñol and Hugo Capablanca blends digitally processed samples, soft static, and sparse, loping rhythms to weave vaporous cocoons around a host of human voices from various collaborators stationed throughout the album like characters embedded in a landscape. On "Epileg", a warped and foreboding melody slips through time behind a child reciting poetry. *Alianza* translates as *Alliance*, and the spoken word passages of this album give it a feeling of being populated, so that you're never alone in the drone.

**The Incidental Crack**  
*Before The Magic*

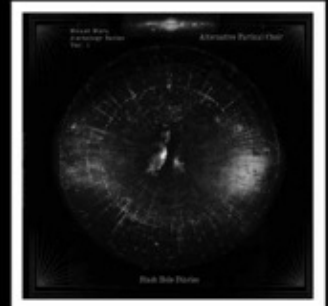
Soundtracking The Void DL/MC  
All of the individuals whose voices and footsteps thread themselves through "If I Can Do It" are going somewhere without us, having conversations that don't concern us. Listening to them is an act of auditory voyeurism which crosses the wires of intimacy and anonymity. The Incidental Crack's *Before The Magic* thrives in spaces of everyday interstitiality where field recordings are nestled into subdued drones, concrete echoes blend with the flapping of distant wings, and a barely-perceptible hum of feedback roils on the edge of implosion. On "Skin", an absurdly melodramatic vintage advertisement gives way to a disarmingly earnest piece of



**DEREK MONYPENY**  
*The Hand as Dealt*  
Fifth solo record by member of Alto! and Freak of Araby Ensemble  
Gatefold 2LP + 7 inch



**ALGAE & TENTACLES**  
*The Mouth Is A Resonant Field*  
Second full length by singer/improviser John Mellillo  
140g LP with Chapbook



**ALTERNATIVE PARTICLE CHOIR**  
*Black Hole Diaries*  
Trio of Alan Bishop, David Oliphant, and Joel Robinson  
Gatefold 2LP



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