

# Review of "Bloody Wing" from **No More Division**

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RED BLACK RED - BLOODY WING

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Bloody Wing

self-released; 2015

**3.9 out of 5**

**By J Simpson**



Electronic music is often criticized for being too clinical and logical, being more like assembling a model kit or homemade PC than "art" per se. This has led to some of electronica's most cutting-edge producers, most notably James Ginzburg from the UK bass mutations Emptyset to forsake the genre altogether, feeling that making techno traxxx was more like playing video games than being a vehicle for self-expression.

Traditionally, this comes from too much reliance on pre-made loops, samples and presets with too many producers playing cut-and-paste, more like assembling a Lego skyline than creating a personal document or artifact. To put it simply and plainly, this hit-and-run/cut-and-paste approach to many/most electronic music styles is like painting entirely with primary colors, or restricting your cooking to using only salt, pepper and butter. Sure, it'll do, but it's kind of bland, not to mention not expressing much of your personality in the creation.

This is one of the best things to come out of the genre-meltdown of the 21st Century. We're moving beyond huge social movements (i.e. genres) in favor of individuality and personal expression. And while the death of the author/artist does create problems when trying to talk about music, it more than makes up for it with new flavors, textures, storylines and representation for all different kinds of people.

New Jersey's Red Black Red is a fantastic representation of the bizarre stylistic *mélanges* we come across these days. Red Black Red is drawing influences from all over the board, from the electro-industrial aggression of NIN, the angst-y synth pop of Depeche Mode, the blue-collar folk rock of Bruce Springsteen and the arty slice-of-life melodramas of Arcade Fire.

That's not to say this particular flavor palate on their album *Bloody Wing* would have been impossible in the 20th century, but highly, highly unlikely. The rustbelt rage, evoked with the burning industrialized beats and synths, could have come from some of the artsier Amphetamine Reptile bands, but they wouldn't have sounded nearly as cosmopolitan. Similarly, folk music and electronica were totally distanced from one another. Coming together, they make for some interesting mental imagery.

The twanging, bluesy, classic rock guitar of "Gasoline" is the perfect example of what is possible blending folk, metal and electronica. The guitars are bluesy, jazzy, like a hint of balsamic vinegar in the otherwise dark chocolate and curry red downtempo, which is further complicated with the barest smatterings of dubstep wobbles. When taken together "Gasoline" conjures images of weekend rave warriors, perhaps driving into some major mecca, tripping their pupils off on some illegal substance, to drag their rusted pick-up home as the birds are starting to cry and whine.

This complex, layered picture strikes me as way more accurate and relevant to the world we're living in today than the myth of some "pure" clubbing existence, where it's all graphic design, runway shows and coke parties, 24/7. That's just not that realistic. Sure, we all like to throw on our trainers and lose it on the dance floor once a week or month or year, but it's mostly not all the time. Likewise, those of us who like to spend time in fields and forests don't just spend our time braiding our beards and plucking our banjos.

So big props to Red Black Red for bridging the gap, for ignoring the rules and taking risks, and making music that is relevant to the world we're living in.

Top Notch Stuff! Recommended!