



Food For Animals

Food For Animals has been making music since April 2003 and it all began with a CD-R. I was in my man Joe Mitra's minivan on some trip with a bunch of friends including the one and only Ricky Rabbit. He had this CD that had like 20 noise tracks on it, like real metallic, dirty, wrenching noise. But in the middle was this track with samples of kids singing and looped violins that had a monstrous beat to it, and I flipped my lid. I can honestly say it was like hearing Wu-Tang for the first time, the beat was just so serious; it made you just sort of lean back and take it in, you know? So I took it home and started writing to it; I had rapped before (lunch room, fun songs with friends,) and Ricky wanted like one rap song on this otherwise harsh noise CD he was going to put out himself. Once we started working on that song (it would become "Brand New") we knew we should do more songs and try to get it out there; we knew we were making something fresh. Pretty soon Ricky started leaving CD-Rs in my mailbox. Each one had the illest shit I had ever heard on it. The tracks for "Elephants" and "Cut and Paste" and "Muckrakers" were all at one point just these demos sitting in my mailbox. We both like mid-90's hip-hop best, you know, Nas, Mobb Deep, Big L, Wu-Tang, Redman, etc. and I think that the raps on the record show that influence at the same time as the beats show an effort to make the roughest, noisiest, craziest shit ever. Hip-hop beats, especially in the underground and indie scenes these days are always just bordering on going full blown crazy, so we just decided to take it way over the top and fuck people's ears up. We blow all samples to bits, piece them back together, and use what we need. We also listen to everything; you know, keep an ear out for any usable material and use it in a new way. Instead of looping the lovely recognizable part, we make new ones out of the old bits. Technology (I should clarify, "music technology") is a wonderful thing and if you're willing to scrounge, we've found that you can create a whole setup for free. "Scavengers" is our testament to that. I borrow or pay homage to lyrics on some of the songs (like Bob Dylan on "Brand New") and Ricky borrows everything and makes sure you can't tell what it was. And then our main man Dr. Dan helps us record it on the downloadable version of pro tools. We like existing outside of the US money machine as much as we can. I mean, culture is so fucked right now, and adhering to one set of "standards" or George Bush's moral center is going to bury us all. We want to explore, to take what we think is great and use it to create new things.

-Vulture Voltaire

PRESS

Words on FFA "Scavengers"

„Splattercore! Triple-time, chewed up and spat out jungle rhythms form the foundation for top-heavy constructions overloaded with Bollywood strings, guitar feedback and backmasked R&B vocals. It's enough to make EI-P's music sound positively straight-forward“

Phillip Sherburne, the Wire, November 2004

„But like Public Enemy, these two pale hip-hop baccalaureates from Maryland succeed in capturing some of the confusion of our current epoch with crushing pop-noise narratives and some equally piquant politics; they're like the Bomb Squad subbing Einstuerzende Neubauten records for Slayer tracks or Atari Teenage Riot albums for, uh, backward whistling teakettles.“

J. Niimi/CityPages

“Food for Animals step up to the plate and mostly obliterate the rhythmic conventions we've come to expect from hip-hop...what remains after DJ/producer Ricky Rabbit goes Rick James all over his ProTools setup sounds like a field recording from a sheet metal factory getting flattened by a herd of bulldozers. In fact, it isn't until two minutes into this 20-minute sound test that any semblance of a beat settles for MC Vulture Voltaire to rap over. But once he rolls through Rabbit's swarm of killer beats with a brassy, heavyweight tone, the gravity is difficult to ignore... “

Jonathan Zwickel Pitchforkmedia

“...Food for Animals has the potential to release the next great indie hip-hop - and potentially the first great noise-hop - record.“

Alex Boer, 10/18/04

“Like a mad Gargamel, Ricky Rabbit likes to screw with hip-hop's DNA, removing such important aspects as rhythm and beats and replacing them with trashy cacophony of noise: clangs, fuzz and sharp edges. If this truly is food for animals, they're some fucked up animals.“

Sean Ford, July 27, 2004

If the screams I let out at the Fox News Channel were run through Autechre's studio apparatus, I might get a sound that comes close to the messy intensity of Scavengers, an impressive first outing by D.C. hip-hop duo Food For Animals. From the belly of the nation's political beast, producer Ricky Rabbit chops up abrasive beats over and over for emcee Vulture Voltaire to lay down his agitated flow, which is no doubt influenced by the district's legendary hardcore scene.

Ron Albanese, Sept. 2, 2004