

he hand-produced a series of solo CDs specifically to sell at those concerts, complete with his own distinctive artwork. One of his paintings also appears on the sleeve of this release.

Turner shares an utter clarity of sound and intention with the late Paul Burwell. His trademark moves might include the impeccably timed snatch of a cymbal, or his ultrahigh metallic scrapes, soaring over a dark rumble of toms. Here it's his quieter side that's on display, free of showboating, but with plenty of careful dialogue. Takahashi is now aged 83. In the 1960s he studied composition with Xenakis, and later founded his Water Buffalo group to perform Asian protest songs. As a pianist he has performed the complete works of Schoenberg, alongside Cardew and Cage; as a conductor he's tackled Varèse and Zorn. After a lifetime spent playing the piano, here he somehow sounds like he's just starting to explore what the instrument can do.

Takahashi's improvising comes sprayed with Brian Eno's "direct inject anti-jazz ray gun" (as credited on Robert Wyatt's *Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard*). Avoiding chords, clusters and for long periods, the entire left side of the keyboard, he traces thin melodic lines and laconic splashes, leaving plenty of room for Turner's low end. When Takahashi eventually launches into those bass notes, he seems in search of a non-metric Latin salsa.

The second of these two 30 minute pieces is the more dynamic. Takahashi creates a clean, airy atmosphere, playing one note at a time. Later Turner gets dense and shakes things up, but wait! Takahashi has discovered the piano's sustain pedal, all the more dramatic for his avoidance of it up to this point. We're floating in a musical snow globe, with Turner supplying the wintry wind. Clive Bell

### Threshing Floor *Threshing Floor*

El Studio 444/Reboot DL/LP

One band, one side of vinyl, five members, three pair-ups snaking back two or three decades and seemingly undiluted by the ravages of time. Wait, do those maths work? Well, Threshing Floor's debut recording brings together John Olson and Nate Young, or the current incarnation of Wolf Eyes – that's a no-brainer; Gretchen Gonzales, who ripped it up with Olson in pre-Wolf Eyes Michigan free-rockers Universal Indians and though taking a more indie-ish path after has returned to the weird fray; and Alan Licht and Rebecca Odes, both members of 1980s/90s artrockers Love Child. There are a few competing narratives at play here, and *Threshing Floor* sounds like it.

Just to complicate things more, Warren Defever of His Name Is Alive appears to be an accessory of this quintet, although it's not clear what he does. It's not clear what the listed members do either, for that

matter. Going by the sleeve notes, what you hear on this LP is a slightly edited version of a live-streamed set recorded in May 2020 for a Jewish arts festival. Performing credits are all things like "sullen strings of serpents" (Gonzales) and "pink light pistol" (Licht).

Starting off strong with dubbed-out yelps, close-miked metallic detritus and thick-aired analogue gurgle, there's generally a sheaf of different elements fighting for supremacy at any moment (Wolf Eyes and Licht, for two, are more than capable of paring it back; this is not an example of such) although the part in the first half where someone loops a kid's toy with a bashed-in voicebox is a cruddy highlight. At least it sounds like a kid's toy. Could be anything. After some 11 minutes, it grinds down into a subdued, proto-industrial styled coda and you're left pleasantly befuddled.

Noel Gardner

### Emmanuelle Waeckerlé *a direction out there, readwalking (with) Thoreau*

Edition Wandelweiser 2×CD/DL

"Going for a walk," Hildegard Westerkamp has suggested, "is one way by which urban people attempt to regain contact with nature." Reading the words of Henry David Thoreau is another option for those feeling hemmed in by the built environment. A solitary walker but communicative writer, Thoreau was a sharp-eyed recorder of the natural world. Among the verbal descriptions in his journal, there are sketches, graphic notations representing the footprint of a crow or a squirrel's tracks. He recognised a deep correspondence between the marks they made and his own printed traces.

London based artist Emmanuelle Waeckerlé has created an open score entitled *readwalking*, arrived at through radical pruning of Thoreau's essay "Walking". Four realisations of that score are to be heard on this release, and Waeckerlé will be adding more to her Bandcamp page. A remote collaboration that brings together the composer's voice and Marie-Cécile Reber's field recordings and electronics is the richest version, acoustically. It's also the one that seems most consciously to hark back to Thoreau, featuring sounds of a kind that might have caught the American writer's sharp ear and suited his gift for resonant note-taking. Readers familiar with John Cage's *Mureau* may also perhaps perceive an affinity between that performative Thoreauvian text and this assemblage of birdsong and insect buzz, occasional musical tones and phonetic articulations.

On other realisations, Antoine Beuger and a few of his Wandelweiser associates take their own readwalks, choosing other directions less readily connected with jottings from Concord, and also less far removed from passing traffic. "*I wish to speak*", says Waeckerlé, readwalking solo

in Thornton Heath. She then proceeds to elide speech and song, and in familiar Wandelweiser fashion, each pause grows tense with anticipation, each sound is a charged yet transient event.

Julian Cowley

### Richard Youngs *CXXI*

Black Truffle DL/LP

#### Ora Clementi

*Sylva Sylvarum*

Black Truffle DL/LP

#### Sam Dunscombe

*Outside Ludlow/Desert Disco*

Black Truffle DL/LP

On 2016's *The Rest Is Scenery*, Richard Youngs constructed a series of pieces built around a single chord, each one playable via a fretboard capo'd in different positions. His 2017 collaboration with Neil Campbell, *Six Scores*, involved creating and exchanging notation before merging their individual performances.

*CXXI* is another reimagining of the creative process, its sleeve chart comprising each chord change used on the two longform pieces within. The first is "Tokyo Photograph", a sequence of minor chords that progress in randomly chosen order for almost 16 minutes. Changes are marked by the beat of a snare, each acting as a clear demarcation between sonic frames, like the snap of a camera's shutter as it captures a moment in time. With the addition of Sophie Cooper's blasts of fohorn trombone to Youngs's own haunting vocals it recalls something by Robert Wyatt, but broken down into the tiniest jazz-inflected particles. Youngs wrings surprising bittersweet emotive clout from a project that deconstructs his approach to making art and offers it up for interrogation.

Also released via Oren Ambarchi's Black Truffle imprint, Sam Dunscombe's process for *Outside Ludlow/Desert Disco* is equally idiosyncratic, but where Youngs strips things back to find beauty, Dunscombe discovers it swathed in the mystery of a random artefact. While travelling in the Mojave Desert, the Australian musician discovered quarter-inch tape entangled around a cactus near the ghost town of Ludlow. Having digitised the tape, they used those sounds along with local field recordings to produce two elongated soundscapes. "Outside Ludlow" begins with low climatic hush that swells into a mechanical drone, as though the recordings have captured some arcane machine lurching out of the sand. The second piece continues the aesthetic, gradually intensifying it into an apex of abrasive industrial grind. Against the dusty drift of the tape, its rawness and brutality is startling.

Where Youngs and Dunscombe generate eeriness or causticity from their idiosyncratic concepts, Ora Clementi's LP appears, initially, geared

toward ambient bliss. This is crys cole and James Rushford's second collaborative project, based this time around various descriptions of literary utopias. Opener "Peach Of Immortality" and the following "Umbrella Spinner" recall the radiant drift of their first record *Cover You Will Softer Me* but it's soon clear that these utopias hide something less beatific within.

"Threadneedle" sways with queasy disquiet, while "Dialogue Between A Grandmaster Of The Knights Hospitaller and A Genoese Sea-Captain" intones lines from an oddly disturbing 17th century utopian text over chimes and hiss. With their intensely intimate and hushed delivery, it registers like a pleasingly unsettling chunk of haunted Jacobean ASMR.

Spenser Tomson

### Nick Zanca

*Cacerolazo*

Full Spectrum DL/MC

"Cacerolazo I" begins with an intense stillness and quiet that might prompt a check as to whether the record is actually playing. From within that inky silence, a low rumble gradually ascends, like the slow clatter of a cutlery draw being emptied in an adjacent room. It ends with the sound of muted dialogue, its regular and familiar rhythm recalling the evocative sound of a preacher delivering prayer, but heard from beneath heavy floor boards.

Nick Zanca usually operates under the moniker Mister Lies. While that project does deploy some similarly angular corners, it has a far more polished and smooth aesthetic, distinct from the found sound roughness here. *Cacerolazo* creeps and scuttles in complete contrast to the assured, optimistic boom of that previous work, before it eventually bulges into full-on weirdo clamour. The album is named after a form of political protest whereby items such as pots and pans are beaten en masse, creating acts of sonic resistance and clanging aural storms of discontent. Zanca built these four pieces from a recording of one such event; while touring Istanbul in 2013, he recorded a cacerolazo in which citizens were expressing discontent for the presidency of Erdogan and the planned demolition of Gezi Park.

"Cacerolazo III" sets down a Savath & Savalas-like balmy tumult, raising a persistent and agitated sonic rumpus. While Zanca states that the record is not "a concrete form of protest music", these pieces feel charged with the controlled but understated anger that comes with defiance in the face of oppression. At a time when traditional acts of protest are being increasingly suffocated and sound is being marshalled into small acts of political significance – such as clapping in support of the NHS in the UK – these pieces feel particularly potent. Spenser Tomson