

DISCOURSE REVIEWS

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REWIND — REISSUES AND BEST-OFs

Einstuerzende Neubauten

Palast Der Republik Dvd (mvd Visual)



Einstuerzende Neubauten may not be a household name, but these radical German pioneers paved the musical path for later folks like Nine Inch Nails, Blue Man Group and Stomp. Since 1980, Blixa Bargeld and his band have made "industrial music" with literal, physical, industrial machinery and instruments made of metal, PVC, rubber and plastic. Bargeld and Co. here masterfully position raw, abrasive aggression alongside quiet subtlety and, in turn, amplify the intensity of those extremes with the tension.

This DVD's concert was the last event to be held in a German parliamentary building before its demolition. Since the band's name translates as "Collapsing New Buildings" and the group is known for destroying objects during performances, one might reasonably expect the band itself to have initiated the building's demise. It doesn't matter that such expectations go unfulfilled, as the things that do happen are wildly fascinating, deeply emotive, melodically sophisticated and profoundly elegant. The visual documentation of the sound-creation process is so staggering that Einstuerzende Neubauten has no business releasing plain old audio CDs, even though the music stands firmly on its own merits. In a post-Reznor world, where rusty sound samples can effortlessly be churned out of a laptop, the astounding beauty and genius lurking here can be too easily overlooked and taken for granted. To become caught up in this recording's immersive physicality is one of the most exhilarating experiences a shiny plastic disc can offer.

— Michael David Toth