

Glenn Mercer – Incidental Hum (2015)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Hana* [2:11] 2. *Cheyenne* [2:43] 3. *Mobile* [2:07] 4. *Yuma* [2:47] 5. *Laramie* [3:09] 6. *Moss Pt.* [4:18] 7. *Winslow* [2:33] 8. *Kodiak* [2:45] 9. *Hermosa* [2:23] 10. *29 Palms* [3:23] 11. *Kara Sea* [3:37] 12. *Salem* [7:03] 13. *Over The Rainbow* [2:23] 14. *Here Come The Warm Jets* [2:42] 15. *Third Stone From The Sun* [7:03] Glenn Mercer - Bass, Drum Programming, Drums, Guitar, Keyboards, Percussion

Feelies frontman Glenn Mercer has made a lot of music in the past four decades, but he's never released a purely instrumental album until now. *Incidental Hum*, his second official solo album after 2007's *Wheels In Motion*, is about eerie moods more than crazy rhythms; its 12 originals followed by three covers represent Mercer's attempt to "evoke an atmosphere that would, in turn, suggest images of a more specific location." Given the ambient nature of the music, a Brian Eno cover is not all that surprising, though Mercer chose to tackle one of Eno's classic pop-rock tracks, "Here Come The Warm Jets." Jimi Hendrix's "Third Stone From The Sun" and the Wizard Of Oz standard "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" also get a reading.

As the title implies, this is music fit for zoning out, but it's not exactly shapeless white noise. There's melody and momentum to these tracks that reminds me of the back half of David Bowie's *Low* or the many instrumentals by Mercer's New Jersey compatriots Yo La Tengo. It's an immersive, atmospheric listen from a true underground icon, and you can hear the whole thing below. --- Chris DeVille, stereogum.com

Call this chill-out music for frazzled souls. Glenn Mercer is the cofounder of New Jersey

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avant-pop band the Feelies; this, his second solo album, is a diverse instrumental set that combines Brian Eno's ambient feel with light-to-medium rock edges and twangy nods to spaghetti western films. It's done with consummate skill; Mercer plays all of the instruments (guitar treatments, drums, synths, bass, flute). An overall triumph of atmospheres that ranges from the hypnotic, Philip Glass-like "Koyaanisqatsi" textures of "Kodiak" to the pulsing "Cheyenne," which sounds like Roxy Music when Eno was still with them. Recorded in Mercer's home studio, the disc has a hobbyist feel, but there's a lot to like, including sparkling covers of Eno's "Here Come the Warm Jets" and Jimi Hendrix's "Third Stone From the Sun." Among 12 originals there are a couple of failures ("Winslow" is soft, creamy, and dull), but the vast majority insinuate themselves into your brain with repeat listens. Not much commercial potential, but a job well done. ---Steve Morse, bostonglobe.com

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