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Selected & Dissected, p.137 The Young Gods by Jim Martin

THE YOUNG GODS

'XXY: Twenty Years 1985-2005'

PIAS

Deconstructing the primal forces at the heart of the amplified world, and reassembling them in thrilling new shapes, The Young Gods' *modus operandi* – making an often laudably fierce racket by appropriating sampled shapes from throughout rock history and beyond – had the more intellectual quarters of the music press going ape-crazy back in the late '80s, and it's still not hard to see why. Never, after all, had such a scrupulously post-modern act rocked so damned hard. Simultaneously punk rock in the irreverent magpie spirit of the sampled medium and agreeably lofty in the elemental forces they explored, this was a band to literally turn trash into art, an alchemical process that only reconnected the listener to a motherlode of power to reignite the most jaded rocker's ire. A band who could transform influences from the weatherbeaten likes of The Doors, Zep and Pink Floyd into the searing sound of the future. Yet also a band who could cheekily cover Gary Glitter and just about get away with it.

What's heartening, however, is how vital the band still sounds. What's more, this was never a band to stay in one place for any duration of time. The more 'rock', guitar-heavy and zeitgeist-friendly 'TV Sky' may have marked their commercial high-watermark, but the Swiss savants were as comfortable covering Kurt Weill as they were exploring ambient soundscapes, as essential whether blasting out the bracing invective of 'Envoye' or strumming the glacial ballad of 'Child In The Tree'.

Label 'em an industrial band at your peril: after twenty years, this band's name, bizarrely, still seems as appropriate as ever, and this noise still sounds like a bright new dawn.

[8.5] JIM MARTIN

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XXY YEARS
1985-2005