

# Gobby: El Honko Mixed

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Gobby's *El Honko Mixed* is sort of like *Superjail* as a radio play, or maybe a "SpongeBob" episode directed by Stan Brakhage or perhaps a recorded diary from Mel Blanc's last days of addiction. It's a non-stop, gonzo barrage of funny voices and ludicrous musical interludes threaded into a loose narrative. Okay, maybe three narratives. The Hoss Records BandCamp calls it "a memoir composed of three timelines interspersed with distended quasi-covers and actual pop songs, all swirled into a larger semi-biographical scope." But best not to think too much about it. Though avant-electronic sound collages like this are often trying to get at some lofty point, *El Honko* succeeds as pure comedy.



The most obvious narrative thread has Gobby asking for directions from a variety of weirdos: first a "Masshole" that might be the same one who freaked out over a sunfish in that viral video from last year, then a Southerner who sounds like a dejected Batman villain, finally a New Yorker who complains of Gobby's body odor ("*did a diapah give boith to an onion?*") The strangers are uniformly rude and threatening towards Gobby, and the Masshole in particular seems to be weighing the possibility of punching our hero in the face. Anyone who's ever been faced with the possibility of a violent confrontation while doing something as innocuous as asking for directions will cringe as well as laugh.

Cartoon voices make up the bulk of the album's real estate, but Gobby also coaxes comedy out of pure sound. As a man sits down for a pleasant dinner of "Chinese Food," he's interrupted first by a horse, then by gunshots, then a vortex of industrial noise, then someone faintly singing what might be Alison Gold's accidentally racist Ark Music Factory single "Chinese Food" (that's the one with Patrice Wilson in a panda suit). There are a lot of half-covers on this thing, which are the record's low point; they seem ironic and mean-spirited. When he sings "679" by Fetty Wap in a dour grunge-junkie voice, is it because he's making fun of the song or because the line "*is it money is it me*" makes a greater point about capitalism or something? Both explanations are pretty bleak.

Gobby, an anonymous Harlem resident who's made beats for Le1f and Mykki Blanco, is one of the most underrated and consistently batshit producers in the United States. His work gyrates between relatively structured, tame releases on respectable labels (last year's *No Mercy Bad Poet* came out on DFA) and tiny-label brain dumps such as this and 2014's brilliant *Wakng*

*Thrst for Seeping Banhee*. He's easy to lump in with the sound-collage underground that spawns vital artists like Rabbit, Elysia Crampton and Chino Amobi. But his music's so viscerally silly—and his aesthetic, a sleepless couch-hopping scuzz akin to early Beck's, so enticing—he might appeal to those who find those artists too heady.

*El Honko Mixed* clocks in at 83 minutes. That might seem daunting, but keep in mind that's about the length of a cable stoner comedy, and *El Honko* is best enjoyed the same way. It's a commitment, but a rewarding one, and you might just find yourself craving it in a certain state of mind—an altered one, most likely.

- Label:  
Hoss Records
- Release Date:  
November 24, 2017