

Stanislav Tolkachev: There Is Almost No God

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Stanislav Tolkachev is beloved in techno circles but virtually unknown to the world at large. It's not hard to see why. The Ukrainian's music is delightfully misanthropic, infamous among DJs for being near-impossible to mix but no walk in the park for home listeners either—especially when his LPs creep well past an hour and a half. His music challenges you to find a way to react to it.



The cover of his new EP *There Is Almost No God* shows a miniature church on fire (Tolkachev is also a professional photographer), and if that makes you think of black metal, there's certainly something to that—in the way his music seems to exist in a rarified sphere independent of mainstream opinion, and also in how he invests most of his skill with sound design in the treble.

This is unusual for dance music, and it gives his music a brisk, cutting quality, like an icy breeze. If that doesn't sound like something you want out of music, this probably isn't for you. As far as abrasion, formlessness, and the way it tests its listener, this is the most extreme music Tolkachev's made to date, and it's hard to say if it's meant as dancefloor filler, egghead experimental music, or some fucked take on ambient. A few of these tracks, including "Bleed On Me" and the title track—which sounds like nothing so much as a chattering troop of monkeys, perhaps a nifty evolution joke to go with the title—are just loops that chug along to infinity.

But interestingly, this might be the most accessible music Tolkachev's ever made. It's easy to imagine fans of heavy music finding this kind of visceral noise attractive. And while his earlier releases sounded a bit like a really weird take on grungy Jeff Mills-style minimalism, this stuff more closely suggests some of the gnarlier recent trends in underground techno: spiky "outsider house," or the technoise of Container and Unicorn Hard-On. Even some of those who got into lo-fi house last year might crave nastier and nastier sounds and find this a logical conclusion.

Besides, Tolkachev doesn't bludgeon. He seduces. There's a lot going on at any given time; listen how the echo on "Landowner" creates a mini beat in the stereo channel separate from the main one, or how the synth line of "Perforated Spoon" tunes and detunes as if blasting through a speaker on the fritz. Even amid all the fire and fury his knack for sound design is obvious.

But the question remains: what are we supposed to do with this music? Do we dance? Do we mull it over like egghead tape music? Do we use it to channel our aggression as many of us do with punk and metal? It's hard to say how this would work in a DJ set, but for a home listener, the best approach is probably to simply surrender and let it ebb and flow in your earphones.

- Label:
Mord
- Release Date:
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