

# Container: LP

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The newest *LP* from Ren Schofield's Container project finds the producer veering further away from his roots in the fertile Providence, Rhode Island noise scene and deeper into unapologetic club music. The drums are crisper here, the in-the-red distortion less all-consuming, the basslines squelchier. It doesn't bludgeon you into submission, nor does it hover stagnantly in the air. It barrels relentlessly forward at high tempos and takes you along with it, tickling your brain all the while. Some listeners might prefer an experience where they're less in control, to surrender to the music rather than navigate it. Others will be surprised by just how playful *LP* can be—and how ridiculous. At its best, the sound design approaches something similar to comedy.

Noise is traditionally used to obscure, obstruct, and distort. *LP*, by contrast, feels almost skeletal. Nothing blurs together. Every element in the mix is clearly discernible, and the individual drums sparkle through the thick patina of fuzz with which they've been treated. This allows individual sounds to shine through, and a lot of them are pretty mind-bending. The bass on "Drain" gives way to a bug's buzz. The pitch-bent acid bassline on "Refractor" seems to talk in a mocking tone of "voice." "Chunked" is all insectoid skitter, similar to the algorithmic

compositions of Mark Fell. “Peppered” is based around a squishy loop it’s hard not to imagine Schofield smiling as he laid down, and as on many tracks, it eventually splits apart as Schofield slowly turns up the delay.

Some might find *LP* almost pop and shy away from it in comparison to the harsher and more uncompromising music on his earlier *LPs*—all his albums so far have been titled this—or his excellent *Adhesive* EP from 2014. Purists will prefer to stick with that one or the comparatively slow-burning menace of his 2015 *LP*. But more people will probably enjoy this one overall. It’s more danceable, it’s more fun, it’s easier on the ears, and the almost psychedelic sound design means it’s a lot more enticing to the casual listener who simply wants something to slosh around their headphones. Whether or not it’s “better” than any of his other *LPs* really comes down to preference, and though I admire the purity of the 2015 album, this one is tons more fun to listen to.

What *LP* proves better than any other previous Container release is how far Schofield can take his sound while maintaining a purist mindset. There’s something resolutely no-bullshit about the Container project, from the identically-named albums to the brisk punk-rock runtimes (this one totals 31 minutes) to his allergy to melody and anything resembling pop-friendly affectation. Though he’s plunged further into the club than ever, you won’t find any stylistic gambits beyond the occasional TB-303 bassline—and an endearing hi-hat tap-tap-tap, almost spy-movie-esque, on “Peppered.” But if his music is austere, it’s not ascetic, and even those accustomed to the most brutalist strains of electronic music might be surprised by how damn goofy Schofield’s music is.