

# Oneohtrix Point Never: The Station

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*The Station* is a grab-bag of loose songs, and it's not really apologetic about it; the cover looks pretty much the same as that of the last Oneohtrix album *Age Of*, and the already-released song "The Station" serves as its load-bearing opener. But it's good music, and as the cult of Daniel Lopatin and his project develops, these tracks might end up as fan favorites.

"The Station" already appeared as the fourth track on *Age Of*. Its almost "Schism"-like riff and brooding lyrics ("*It must be an infestation/ Something that I can't control*") hearken back to the explorations of canned '90s alt-rock angst on 2015's *Garden of Delete*. But aside from that, it's pretty representative of what's available on *Age Of*: an eerie fake nylon-string guitar, vocals by Lopatin corroded by shrieking Auto-Tune, and unpredictable samples like a swell of incongruously pretty film-score strings towards the end. It's Oneohtrix at his most structured and pop-adjacent, which isn't surprising when you learn it was sourced from a demo for Usher.

"Monody" is IDM like Autechre and Boards of Canada used to make it, half beat and half industrial nightmare, all pitch-bent melodies and faraway pads and drums that sound like they're bursting out of a cobwebby broken radio. It's a stylistic experiment that wouldn't fit that easily on most of his other albums but finds a home here, a window into a possible influence

that could have been implied in his fetishes for detuned synth and post-apocalyptic aesthetics.

“Blow By Blow” carries a lot of the album’s weight, being both the longest track and the one that squeezes the most in. It shifts between placid new-age piano and a hair-metal blitz of guitar noise throughout its runtime, and it really feels less like a stand-alone song than a stretch of the record, letting its 17 minutes deepen as much as possible. It might have been stronger if it had been the second track, sucking us in after the familiarity of “The Station,” because by the time it’s over and it transitions into ambient “Trance 1,” the EP feels like it’s essentially finished.

“Trance 1” is something Lopatin’s only made intermittently in the last half-decade: a pure ambient track, a nebulous synth expanse that feels like it occupies light-years. It’s not unlike what he gave us on *Rifts* and *Returnal* before moving towards something more kinetic and challenging on *Replica* and his subsequent releases. At just over three minutes it feels like a morsel, but it’s still a treat to hear him return to this sound, which is what attracted so many fans in the first place before he found his contemporary identity as a culture-jamming jokester.

No musician aside from Lopatin is more responsible for the tenor of millennial experimental electronic music, which transmutes elements from the internet (both Windows 95 nostalgia and the mysteries of the dark web) and pop culture into something gnarly and dystopian. He all but invented vaporwave with his *Eccojams* tape and *Memory Vague* film, and after every release small cults of imitators crop up. It’s not out of the question that he might join Aphex Twin in the electronic pantheon. If so, this EP, too good to be written off, might find new life as a holy grail.