



features | columns | music | film | tv | dvds | books | comics | multimedia | events | blogs | media | front



CALL FOR PAPERS: *PopMatters* seeks feature essays about any aspect of popular culture, present or past.

Loop-Based Production
Multitrack Recording

GO!

Search New and Used
amazon.com.

FILASTINE

Burn It

(Soot)

Rating: 5

US release date: 25 April 2006

UK release date: 13 March 2006

by **Dave Heaton**

Email Print Comment

Thirteen songs into Filastine's album *Burn It*, we find ourselves at a demonstration, standing in the middle of a drum corps making noise out of protest. It's a sound familiar from recent years, the sound of anti-globalization rallies. Or rather, it's more like a studio recreation of the sounds of a protest (of the drum parts you hear in Christopher DeLaurenti's vivid field recording *N30: Live at the WTO November 30 1999*), that was then taken by a DJ and mixed a bit, looped into a weird jazzy state of limbo. What still comes across to the listener determination, born out of anger at the state of the world. In a way this track is an explicit statement of the spirit running through the whole album, similar in purpose to the Dubya-quoting interlude "This Is a Fight". It's a news clip you can dance to, a "report from the frontlines" given a beat.



Amazon
Insound

Filastine himself has played in one of those drum corps; he founded a protest-touring drum ensemble called the Infernal Noise Brigade. He's also traveled the world to see the effects of globalization firsthand. That traveling is an integral part of *Burn It*, biographically and musically. The album was recorded in Brazil, Cuba, and Marrakesh. It includes the voices of singers and rappers from across the globe; its words come in several languages. This is global music, constructed to tap into the universal human voice while incorporating aspects of many world cultures. Filastine himself serves as a guide and curator—he's moving from place to place, laptop in hand, and using those experiences to create a distinctly inclusive style of music.

"Get on That Bullhorn & Leave the Fucking Country", one brief interlude track is titled. Filastine himself has certainly done just that. In the music on *Burn It* you can hear the time he's spent in India, Brazil, in northern Africa... and who knows where all else. There's a distinctly Middle Eastern sound to parts of the album, there's definitely rhythms from South America and Africa, and it's all held together within the basic style of that universal global language: hip-hop.

Filastine takes styles, voices, and instruments from around the world and supports them with a laidback yet vigorous array of laptop beats and live percussion. *Burn It* is filled with the atmosphere of places around the world, and manages to stay free from generic "world music" tropes. This isn't the sound of musicians from different countries meeting in some antiseptic studio to "learn from each other." It's the sound of a vagabond, self-proclaimed "audio terrorist" traveling the world, meeting people where they live, and blending their backgrounds, their feelings, their personalities, their home environments in with his own. The result is occasionally intoxicating conversations between cultures, with beats, jittery and grounded, meeting a violin or a rhaita (a North African oboe-like instrument), and sitting right next to vocalists from Cuba and New Orleans and elsewhere.

Burn It is a humanist sort of protest album, one based in the sounds and experiences people live with. It also is a rather mellow one, too much so for an album that should get you riled up, make you want to tour the world and try to change it for the better. An overall sense of anger at the capitalist domination of the world is introduced explicitly through the lyrics, and conveyed musically through Filastine's audio world-tour approach, which craves, sometimes nostalgically, for the significance of

TODAY ON POPMATTERS

- FEATURES | recent
- Empty Nest Syndrome: *The Sopranos* Season Six
 - Madison Park Is Into Farm Animals
- COLUMNS | recent | blogs
- ANGLO VISIONS: Prime Location: How Sitcom Settings Add to the Fun
 - STALE POPCORN: The Battle for M. Night Shyamalan's Artistic Soul
- MUSIC | recent | short takes | downloads
- Mr. Lif: *Mo' Mega*
 - Maurice el Medioni & Roberto Rodriguez: *Descarga Oriental*
 - Radio 4: *Enemies Like This*
 - Supersilent: 7
 - Various Artists: *Om: Miami*
 - Klimatek: *Music to Fall Asleep*
 - Kieran Kane, Kevin Welch, Fats Kaplin: *Lost John Dean*
 - Maritime: *We, the Vehicles*
- EVENTS | recent
- Richard Hawley: 26.May.06: Leeds, England
- FILM | recent
- The Heart of the Game
- DVDS | recent
- Beavis & Butt-head: The Mike Judge Collection, Volume 2
 - Shadows in the Sun
- MULTIMEDIA | recent
- Metroid Prime: Hunters
- BOOKS | recent
- Watching Wildlife by Cynthia Chris

RECENT MUSIC

In bold are *PopMatters* Picks, the best in new music.

- CD REVIEWS**
- The Ark**
 - Ass Ponys
 - Jon Auer**
 - Augie March**
 - Band of Horses
 - Boy Area Funk 2**
 - The Black Angels
 - The Black Keys**
 - The Boy Least Likely To**
 - Anouar Brahem
 - Tom Brosseau**
 - Built to Spill
 - Richard Butler
 - David Byrne and Brian Eno
 - Calexico
 - The Charlatans UK
 - The Church
 - The Coup**
 - The DFA Remixes: Chapter One*
 - J Dilla (Jay Dee)**
 - Drive-By Truckers
 - The Duke Spirit
 - E-40
 - Eagles of Death Metal
 - Editors
 - Elefant
 - Electric Light Orchestra
 - Elf Power
 - Envelopes**
 - The Essex Green
 - Exit Music: Songs for Radio Heads*
 - The Flaming Lips
 - Ghostface Killah**
 - Gotan Project
 - The Green Arrows
 - Guillemots
 - Ben Harper
 - Pearl Jam**
 - People Under the Stairs
 - Pinetop Seven
 - The Playwrights**
 - The Presets
 - Prince
 - Rahim
 - The Rough Guide to Flamenco Nuevo*
 - Sing-Sing
 - The Slackers**
 - Sonic Youth
 - Bubba Sparxxx
 - Bruce Springsteen**
 - Candi Staton
 - The Streets
 - Stereophonics**
 - Supreme
 - Matthew Sweet
 - Television Personalities**
 - T.I.**
 - Tom Verlaine
 - The Vines
 - Voices from the Frontline*
 - Sean Watkins
 - Wilderness
 - Cassandra Wilson**
 - Wordsworth
 - The Yeah Yeah Yeahs**
 - Young and Sexy
- EVENT REVIEWS**
- Architecture in Helsinki
 - Belle and Sebastian
 - The Black Crowes
 - Neko Case
 - Clogs + QQQ
 - Dark Star Orchestra
 - Elbow
 - The Flaming Lips + The Go! Team

approach, which argues, sometimes convincingly, for the significance of the uniqueness of all cultures. But all too often his production style overwhelms the proceedings by turning this into too laidback an affair. The tempo of most songs is slow, and the mood is spacey. Every time the tempo picks up, it soon falls back in line. It's hard to feel engaged with the world and its problems when chill-out music is taking a hold of your body, leading you down the road toward zoning out completely and dropping off into your own head. Shouldn't the music of an "audio terrorist," battling hegemony with his laptop, sound a bit more driven than this? More lively, more awake, more engaged?

Burn It is most rewarding when the level of distance which monotony creates is broken down, usually by an especially spellbinding convergence of cultures. Filastine is a convincing travel agent, but a less convincing rebel. *Burn It* is marked less by fire than by the gliding, floating feeling you get during a train ride nap, when you know you're moving but you're not sure where to, or why.

RATING: 

— 12 May 2006

- | | |
|--|---|
| Juvenile | Gomez |
| Katatonia | Gorillaz |
| Steve Khan | Ben Harper |
| Liars | HorrorPops |
| LL Cool J | Jerry Lee Lewis |
| Charles Lloyd | Metric |
| Madlib the Beat Konducta | Beth Orton |
| Margot and the Nuclear | Lee "Scratch" Perry |
| So and So's | Pretty Girls Make Graves |
| Massive Attack | + Giant Drag |
| MONO | Radiohead |
| Murs & 9th Wonder | Sound Tribe Sector 9 |
| Ne-Yo | South |
| No-Neck Blues Band | Tinariwen |
| Part Chimp | Trinity International Hip |
| Parts & Labor | Hop Festival1 |
| | Violent Femmes |

[advertising](#) | [about](#) | [contributors](#) | [submissions](#) | Hosted by OCS Solutions
 © 1999-2006 PopMatters.com. All rights reserved.
 PopMatters.com™ and PopMatters™ are trademarks of PopMatters Media, Inc. and PopMatters Magazine.