



Portishead's Dummy (33 1/3)

By RJ Wheaton

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An album which distilled a genre from the musical, cultural, and social ether, Portishead's *Dummy* was such a complete artistic achievement that its ubiquitous successes threatened to exhaust its own potential. RJ Wheaton offers an impressionistic investigation of *Dummy* that imitates the cumulative structure of the album itself, piecing together interviews, impressions of time and place, cultural criticism, and a thorough exploration of the music itself.

The approach focuses as much on the reception and response that *Dummy* engendered as it does on the original production of the album. How is that so many people have, collectively, made a quintessential headphone album into a nightclub album? How have they made the product of a niche local scene into an international success? This is the story of how an innovative, experimental album became the iconic sound for the better part of a decade; and an aesthetic template for the experience of music in the digital age.

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Editorial Review

Review

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About the Author

RJ Wheaton's writing on music, film, and literature has been published in The Oxford American, DaCapo's Best Music Writing series, and at PopMatters.com, where he is Senior Producer. He currently lives in Toronto.

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