

THE MAE SHI

Hlllyh CD – Mophonics / Team Shi

Augmenting the frantic amalgam of yelps and beeps for which they're known, L.A.-based The Mae Shi's *Hlllyh* (pronounced "hell yeah") is one for the books. This time around, the band creates successive tracks of pop song length, unleashing their outrageous electronic power-pop grace and grit that's still deliciously based in experimental punk roots. The result is wildly more coherent but as intense as ever. *Hlllyh* is branded by witty, cheeky lyrics competing

for the limelight with impeccably executed keys and brilliantly pounded percussion. "Run to Your Grave," "The Melody," and "Boys In the Attic" have the perfect combination of pop sensibility to mesh with their commanding lead lines and compositional patterns. The record is divided up by the momentous "Kingdom Come," the 10-plus minute track which is almost exclusively decadent programming. While it conjures up the raucous schizophrenic synths of The Mae Shi's discography, the song is much more composed and structured. It's a signifier of a band that's matured immensely. While the segue into the track is seamless, it can't sustain the lightning pace of the record, which begs to scurry on to the boisterous "Party Politics" two songs later. *Hillyh* is peppered with whispers, banging on pots and the dynamic, split-second volume changes that jolt heart attacks. It's easily their most cohesive and scintillating effort to date: a reminder that it's not unhip to get excited over a new release. (Meredith Turits)

mae-shi.com