



REVIEW: Matta Gawa's "Ba"

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It's great when I come across an album where I don't know the difference between the title of the album and the name of the artist. I really enjoy looking at a cover that tells me nothing about the content within. In this case, the group is **Matta Gawa** and the name of the album is *Ba* (Engine Studios). This 2-man Ohio band go right into a room, turn on their instruments, hit the drum kit and just play,

allowing each other to steer the way with no sense of direction but to move forward. They play, metaphorically, with blindfolds on and it could be some controlled noise rock with the kind of freedom one can expect from free jazz, where you'll hear a bass with an intense amount of distortion, or they're tweaking an effect pedal and making things sound ridiculous. Then have a guitar player that may sound like his ass has been itching for a week and he's trying to cure it by playing in secret code. Then you have a drummer that no only relies on his own kit to set the mood, but has various percussion instruments that make him sound like the offspring of **Billy Martin of Medeski, Martin & Wood**. In fact, if you like the more exotic and freak-out sections of MMW, you may find something of interest in Matta Gawa. As with any improvisational music, anything and everything can and does go, so what you hear in these songs may only sound like this on this album. There are titles like "Dialogue of a Man With His Ba", "My Ba Cannot Be Kept From My Corpse", and "You Ba Will Not Abandon Your Corpse", it should be obvious they're not caring about converting any of **Katy Perry's** fans anytime soon (although that would be great).

The sound quality is un-produced, it's not bootleg quality but don't expect some mindbending panning or anything too exotic in the mix. It would be cool to hear them get a souped up mix, but I'm satisfied with the "let's run in and see what comes out of it" approach of Matta Gawa. As for what a Matta Gawa is and how it relates to the power of *Ba*, I have no idea and I'm fine with that. I like what's here and I hope they'll record and release more music.

(BONUS: I like the fact that their MySpace page lists **Sun Ra**, **Kool Keith**, **Mission Of Burma**, and **E-40** as friends. *Ba* indeed.)



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