

SHARKATTACK! MUSIC | ARTIST BIOGRAPHY



WHAT IS COMPASS?
Love + 5 cities + 47 instruments + 17 musicians + Pain + 8 Studios + 1 Ductlimer + 1 Cathedral Organ + 3 atomic bombs + 1 clarinet + 5 Computers + 1 War + 2 Galleries + 1 Condemned Building + the miracle of existence + the magic medium of sound = ??? Compass is a complex and unpredictable machine. It absorbs and collects sounds the way a homeless person might stock up on bent coat-hangers for their shopping cart - but somehow Compass manages to take those hangers and create songs. Good songs. Interesting songs. Strange songs. At times you'll think they're brilliant. Other times you'll ask yourself whether this isn't just some joke that you don't quite get. And there will be times when you'll think he's just insane. Of the three, I can only assure you that Compass is no joke.

ANARCHY<CHINATOWN
Compass was founded in 1997 at the historic Camp 2 Studios. Amongst 40 crazed artists, drug dealers, and

other fools, Dave Doom developed the compositional method he still employs today: play (repeat). Surrounded by electronics, organs, drums, pianos, guitars and musicians, Doom began to collect and release sound collages. His first release, a homespun EP, caught the attention of SharkAttack!, who liked it so much they released a gorgeous red vinyl Compass 7" and encouraged Compass to work on a full length. 6 years and 100 songs later, SharkAttack! is bringing Compass to the masses with the debut full-length you hold in your hands.

ART AND THE NOMAD

Compass began creating the sounds you now possess in a custom, hand built composition studio at the Oni Gallery in Boston's Chinatown, but in October 2001, Doom hit the streets with his saxophone intent on living by the force (of music) alone. A freeloading nomad to this day, Doom recorded much of his debut album 'on the road' at various hideaways and studios across New England and Canada. Busking for lunch money in Montreal for a spell, Doom soon found himself playing saxophone with afro-beat cult Ark of Infinity to a crowd of thousands at the Montreal International Jazz Festival.

"THE MOST RIDICULOUS-IDEA"

Compass features scores of artists who chant, bark, giggle, sing, play: drums, handmade dulcimers, cathedral organs, harp and more... to which Doom adds samples as well as his own piano, voice, saxophone, 12 string guitar, flute, bongos, drum kit, twigs, synths, pots, and breaths. "The Most Ridiculous Idea" is Compass' working / touring methodology that seems to incorporate anything and anyone with whom Doom may come in contact, including the audience. Which again begs the question: Who is Compass? Who is going to be on stage with Doom tonight? What the hell is that sound? If one listens closely, one might eventually discover that the world is the band and that the band has created an elegiac, hopeful, tuneful record for itself under the moniker of Compass. Confused? I know- it's ridiculous.

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The Boston Globe

By Tom Kietly January 25, 2002
The artists on Shark Attack Music's "3.5eps" compilation embrace the subtleties of sound more regularly associated with UK-based artists and come to the surface with an absolute treasure. The release begins with the ethereal ambience of Charlene's "Look for the Line" before HelloAttack's more melodically moody "D" follows, establishing a diverse tone for the collection. With four contributors on board, the influences run the gamut from the Mojave 3-like acoustic prettiness of Lockgroove's "All Caught Up" to the smoky Parisian feel of Compass's "Skyscraper" (delivered in French). On "Low Down," Charlene establishes a groove that would not be out of place alongside the quieter offerings of Super Furry Animals, while Compass's "Beth" is reminiscent of Joseph Arthur's work with sound textures.

It's been too long since we last heard from planet Lockgroove, but they make up for lost time with some help from an extended family on the SharkAttack! label/collective's album-length four-band compilation 3.5 eps. Lockgroove's twin brothers, Ryan and Martin Rex, return with what might be their best material yet: the elephant fog has lifted somewhat, and their blissfully melancholic pop side predominates on three new feedback-drenched rainy-day dispatches from the tattered remnants of daydream nation. Another Rex brother, John, shows up in Charlene, whose squalling two-chord drug pop comes from the Jesus and Mary Chain school of Velvet Underground worship - think Black Rebel Motorcycle Club with a minor in Medicine and My Bloody Valentine. Lockgroove's David S. Goodman unveils his solo project Compass, in which he cloaks his Syd Barrett folkisms in comforting algorithmic bleeps from hallucinating mainframes. And the instrumental quintet HelloAttack are happy to erect somber, elegiac cathedrals around gently weeping slide guitars, but they're even more ecstatic when they're tearing the whole thing down in a rush of oncoming traffic noise.

- Carly Carioli

5PLENDID

For a compilation record, this is a surprisingly cohesive affair; the four artists represented here share an affinity for shoegazery fuzzy guitars and deadpan vocals. That can lend itself to a sort of sameness -- indeed, it's difficult to tell the bands apart if you're not studying the track listing -- but the mix of dreamy, spare instrumental passages with some really charming and catchy pop songs makes up for whatever few complaints that might engender. Most notable are the contributions from Compass, the solo project of David S. Goodman, whose songs juxtapose lo-fi singer-guitarist fare with bright synths, samples, and the occasional drum machine. His "Skyscraper" is a densely arranged, ridiculously danceable four minutes of pop glee. The other bands involved aren't too shabby, either. Charlene provides a few dark, moody songs that still manage singalong choruses, and the more acoustic Lockgroove have a sort of mellow driving quality and a breathy singer that could make them the Sea and Cake's edgier younger brothers. Fourth band HelloAttack's instrumentals can go on a few minutes too long, but they can be easily overlooked in favor of the creamy pop goodness that surrounds them. Tasty.

-- Mandy Shekleton

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