

# Oh Transcendental Youth We're Really In It Now

By Jericho Z

Or as I like to call it, Trans Youth. The album cover is painted mainly in blues: sketchy drawings of demon faces in the night sky, stars, the moon, and people flying toward it all, lifted up on clouds. All of them blue. It's that kind of album. / I am trans. On occasion, I think of killing myself. I'm used to it. I've had the blood on my hands. / Sometimes you do something horrible and drastic, JD says, on an outdoor stage or bar or concert hall. / This is a song about Judas, who did a terrible thing and killed himself and it's pretty sad so you have to cry for him. / Being trans is a little like being suicidal. But I am not Judas. Being trans is like daydreaming of shoving my girl self off a skyscraper, or more violent ends than that. / Trans Youth is a sad album, because it is about sad people. John Darnielle knew what that meant. He was one, as a child in an abusive home, as a young adult grappling with addiction, lost in himself, and later in life, as a nurse, caring for people afflicted with all kinds of awful, sad things. / Everyone in Trans Youth is alive and alive and alive. Everyone in Trans Youth is struggling with this state of being, but they are alive, at least in the three minutes they exist in song. You see, this is a great victory. / Transcendental means to relate to the mind, to not only escape but to escape to something good. To leave behind your body, its tiredness, your ugly flesh. So much is carried in the body, most of it not good. Physicality means vulnerability means permanence, you drag it forward day by day and it trails behind you picking up dirt and scrapes and things to be sad about. / At the height of my suicidality I have mostly felt tired, felt like there was nothing left, no more space on my body. Like a chewed up popsicle stick. An overplayed song. / Amy, AKA Spent Gladiator 1, is the first song on the album / I like to think I believe in trans joy but instead I mostly end up trans everything else. / The most transgender song in Transcendental Youth is White Cedar, wherein the narrator exudes this immensely collected patience, wise not in the old-professor ancient-grandmother kind of wise but a wise which here I mean clarity, clarity after a breakdown or after emerging from a depressive episode