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Jai Agnish, 'Automata'

(Blue Bunny) (08/17/00)

Thrumming, droning, and sometimes just this side of whiny, Agnish's voice is strangely appealing in a dreamy, through-the-gauze sort of way. His songs are based on simple, almost folksy acoustic guitar and vocal lines, which would be pleasant enough on their own. But Agnish augments this rather straight-forward indie-rock sound with all sorts of audio treats including a tastefully demure drum machine, various found sound samples and the squeaks and burbles of an analog synth. The result is something altogether more intriguing than his sources and influences. Well, perhaps not more intriguing than God. You wouldn't necessarily know it just by listening—Automata is thankfully free of proselytizing or hectoring—but Agnish is a devout Christian. His music, and his much-better-than-average zine Flygirl (flygirlweb.com) explore the intersection of indie-rock culture and Christianity. Musically, it's a pretty interesting crossroads—and Agnish isn't sitting there alone. His label, Blue Bunny, has also just released 8.21, a compilation of other "more out there" Christian musicians. No matter the state of your soul, your ears will thank you for checking it out. THOMAS

HAYDEN

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