

TONE GLOW

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by Joshua Minsoo Kim

Fast Edit is a window into my older self, into a time when opinions about underground music started to crystallize. In these serrated guitar riffs is my disdain for math rock's sterility (it was always *too* perfect to be exciting), in these stop-then-hobble drum beats is a reminder of my love for free-improv rock (it was always the ramshackle *imperfection* that struck me), in the unconcerned howl of these vocals and lurching tempos are my prickly relationship with slowcore (it always reminded me of my own imperfections so perfectly).

In this amalgamation, Still House Plants find a midpoint that allows their music to go beyond what any of these styles of music typically offer. There's a sensitivity to Finlay Clark's austere guitar playing—it's rigid, but there's a sense they're deeply focusing, as if trying to unearth some truth through repetition instead of showing off their chops or simply entrancing the listener. There's a palpable calculation to David Kennedy's drumming that makes the sloppiness feel like a point of pride—it's like he's concentrating hard to encourage himself, to embrace all his idiosyncrasies. I feel elated when hearing Jessica Hickie-Kallenbach's vocals—her singing is more empowering than just straight-ahead catharsis, every coo and wail an opportunity to use her voice as a tool for loving herself for what she can do.

Fast Edit is a window into my future self, into a time when opinions about who I am start to crystallize. I hear a joy in both self and in community here, in restraint and looseness. There's no other album this year that's made me so grateful (it always reminds me of who I was and who I can be—and in a way, who I am is imperfectly perfect).

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