THE DEATH SET
Rad Warehouses
Bad Neighborhoods
DFM084-2

Baltimore City Paper

The Death Set - Rad Warehouses Bad Neighborhoods
Morphius/Rabbit Foot
June 2007
Jess Bowers

The Death Set, Baltimore’s favorite Australian spazz-punk transplant twosome, has undergone some changes since To, its 2006 irresistible, sample-happy EP. One half of the dynamic duo, Beau Velasco, has since left the band to pursue other interests, and he’s been replaced by the capable chops of Ecstatic Sunshine guitarist Matt Papich. Not surprisingly, Death Set has stuck to its crowd-pleasing formula-two-minute pop songs featuring double-tracked falsetto vocals, samples from late-night infomercials, clubby drum machine beats, video-game bleeps and bloops, and a special brand of frenetic positivity rarely seen in punk. While Rad Warehouses Bad Neighborhoods, an EP combining new tracks with a handful of remixes and rarities, lacks an obvious, hooky hit like the group’s earlier “Negative Thinking,” the band is clearly moving its formula forward. “Listen to This Collision” is built around a ping-ponging MIDI beep, as elfin guitarist/vocalist Johnny Siera chants fractured feel-good mottoes like “One for all for everyone/ Don’t know where, I gotta run.”

“Impossible” also possesses the cheerily demonic mojo of the Death Set’s earlier material, with the made-to-be-screamed chorus “You’re impossible!” and “Zombie” is built around a rollicking riff and chock-full of spoken-word samples from zombie flicks, artfully arranged midsong. (The track also includes one of the most satisfying examples ever recorded of the band’s trademark “waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”) The second half of the EP drags slightly, despite remixes of “Impossible” and “Distressed” by Dan Deacon and Bonde Do Role, respectively. “Distressed by Late Night Television” is a new, slower-sounding version of earlier track “Distressed,” and on this one, Siera’s distinctive vocals are dialed up so you can understand what he’s singing without a cheat sheet. Still, despite a weak back end, Rad Warehouses Bad Neighborhoods is a must-have for anyone interested in Baltimore’s art-punk warehouse rock, the first pressing made even more appealing by the inclusion of a killer silkscreened flag designed by Nolen Strals of Double Dagger/Post Typography fame.

COVERT CURIOSITY AUSTIN, TX

Earlier this week I received word about yet another exciting act who call Baltimore home. They’re called The Death Set, and they have an album coming out next week via Morphius titled Rad Warehouses Bad Neighborhoods. It immediately caught my attention when I first turned it on, and I’ve found myself listening to it over and over again to shake cobwebs of dull music out of my ears. They sound like The Go! Team jacked up on Red Bull and meth. Basically, the antithesis of boring.

I would recommend taking a listen to the full album opposed to just sampling the two tracks below, but check it out either way. I didn’t know what to think of this one at first, but for some reason I can’t stop listening to it. Make sure to listen to “Zombie,” that’s a rock & roll song right there.
Onto Baltimore -- well, mostly. Australia/Baltimore’s The Death Set have just put out a new EP titled Rad Warehouses Bad Neighbourhoods (which you can buy, here) and will be touring around the U.S. with Baltimore-based art punks Ponytail. The Death Set, whom I’ve been pretty obsessed with as of late, play dancey noisepop with two guitars, a drum machine, and various samples. Their live show’s amazing and they seem to have endless amounts of energy. Here’s a track from their Intermission 7” released on Modular last year. Buy some stuff at a show, or here.

"The Death Set began a little over a year ago, at a random show held in the sleepy resort town of Gold Coast, Australia. As part of the experimental-rock outfit Black Panda, Beau Velasco plugged in his microphone and guitar and proceeded to flail around the room. The convulsive, hyperactive performance caught the attention of Johnny Siera, a skinny, baby-faced punk playboy with a penchant for tight jeans and drum machines. Siera and Velasco hopped a plane to the U.S. last September and settled in Baltimore. The Death Set’s main strength is the strange alchemy that occurs when both members sing simultaneously, Velasco’s slightly throaty snarl undercutting Siera’s high-pitched Pete Shelley-esque shriek. Processed through their homemade mics, the two distinct voices fuse into one, breaking stride only to trade Beastie Boys-style shout-outs." - Baltimore City Paper
THE DEATH SET
Rad Warehouses
Bad Neighborhoods
DFM084-2

BUTTERTEAM.COM
The Death Set - Rad Warehouses Bad Neighborhoods
Morphius/Rabbit Foot
June 24, 2007

The Death Set Are Scary, And So Are Vampire Weekend

Seems like a pretty intimidating group of lads, what with the name The Death Set and an aggressively pastel sneaker palette, no? But they’re pretty harmless unless you’re allergic to buttery beats. The Baltimore-based (via Sydney/Brooklyn) crew will be jumping/sweating/yelling at Whartscape along with Dan Deacon, Spank Rock and a few other B-more hotshots.

WATERCOOLERGOSSIP.NET
The Death Set Kills for Fun
March 09, 2007

Beau Velasco and Johnny Siera are The Death Set. These two, who met in Sydney but now live in Baltimore, play punk over lo-fi electro. Live, this translates to them thrashing guitars and screeching into old harmonica microphones or rotary telephone receivers while a mechanical rhythm chugging in the background. To add to the mess, they both sing at the same time. Their robo-rhythm section pulls together all sorts of noises from Casios, toys, synths, old records, to kitchenware into disco, b-more, and electro beats. That may seem a little bare, but all the while, Beau and Johnny are spazzing out in smack dead in the middle of the crowd.

I have never seen them live but the two are so notorious that Baltimore City Paper named them Best Live Band of 2006. The Death Set has played shows with Japanther, Lifetime, Matt & Kim, Spankrock, and Best Fwends. They are playing tonight at Uncle Paulie’s in Greenpoint. The have an EP To from 2005 on RabbitFoot Records, which clocks in as a ten-minute electric jolt of abrasive punk rock. If you can’t go tonight, you’ll have to wait till May.
THE DEATH SET
To
RAB-001

Baltimore City Paper
The Death Set
October 2005
Jess Bowers

Morphius Prime

Luckily, Death Set—a young duo from Sydney, Australia—came armed with two guitars, jury-rigged microphones made out of telephone receivers, and a wall of speakers blasting backing tracks from its frenetic EP. Playing in front of the stage usually feels like an annoying gimmick, especially in the tiny Talking Head, but Death Set’s flailing filth-and-fury antics left the assembled crowd breathlessly asking, “Is that all?” after its manic six-song set. The band repeated its entire repertoire on Saturday night, before taking off for its new home in Brooklyn. Keep your eyes out for these guys.

Pickwick Paper
The Death Set
Issue No. 6
November 2005

OZtria - Vienna Schnitzel
OZtria a group exhibition of Australian artists in Austria. Showcasing the works of Jonathan Zawada, Abbey McCulloch, Gemma Jones, ABCK, Dyms, Elana Mullaly and Beau Velasco. The show, entitled ‘Vienna Schnitzel,’ will be exhibited in a kitsch theatre/bookstore ‘Pickwick’s’ in the heart of Wien. A diverse range of works including posters, illustration, handmade toys, zines and works on canvas will be on display from November 18th until December 1st 2005. With the official opening night on Thursday 17th November.

Exclusively Distributed by
Morphius Records, Inc.
PO Box 13474, Baltimore, MD 21203

Press contact: Simeon Walunas
410.662.0112, fax 410.662.0116
simeon@morphius.com
www.morphius.com
THE DEATH SET

To

RAB-001

BEATBOTS

The Death Set - “To”
J. Bowers
March 14, 2006
9 out of 10

Discuss this review on the Beatbots Message Boards

Baltimore’s newly adopted Australian spazz-punk duo hit the ground running with To, a freshly remastered EP that showcases the year-old band’s frenetic, exuberant D.I.Y. aesthetic in 20-some breathless, high-energy, eardrum-throttling minutes.

The Death Set’s unique, infectiously catchy sound is heavily reliant on drum machines, laptops, intelligently exploited samples from television and hip-hop, and simple guitar riffs and keyboard parts that carom off of each other like pinballs. But the band’s real strength stems from their layered vocal stylings— Beau Velasco’s throaty wail supports and augments Johnny Siera’s Buzzcockian shrieks, creating a completely new voice that is far greater than the sum of its parts. Every so often, the whole operation collapses into a gut-wrenching, wordless wail that seems set to become the duo’s trademark.

Unlike many punk outfits, The Death Set infuses their lyrics with playfulness and positivity. Once you figure out what they’re saying through their jury-rigged microphones (created by gutting old telephones and antique radio mikes), it’s hard not to sing along with lines like “if I felt cynicism I’d wrap it in a blanket of discontentment—fuck that!” (“Negative Thinking”) or “it’s a top-secret mission and our enemies are wishin’ that they had a bigger gun” (“Around The World”).

For those who managed to get a hold of To in its earlier, non-RabbitFoot incarnation, this EP includes a brand-spanking-new track, “Boys/Girls.” Stomping along on a killer swampy bassline, this paean to the perils of being an effeminate rock boy finds Siera squealing “it’s easier to get boys than girls, ‘cause faggy boys don’t get them wet!” and features the catchy refrain “How fru-strat-ing!”

Of course, it’s impossible to capture the raw, sweaty, destructive punk energy of The Death Set’s Copycat warehouse shows on disc, but To is a great snapshot of a young band on the make—giddy, accomplished, and over far too soon. Thank goodness for repeat buttons.
THE DEATH SET
To
RAB-001

NEW YORK NIGHT TRAIN
The Death Set (LIVE)
“To”
March 2006

Cinemechanica, The Deathset, Show Me the Pink, The Stabs – Cake Shop $7
Tonight there’re way too many good shows, but if I had to pick one, it’d be the underdog. The Cake Shop is throwing down a strong bill of four very obscure touring bands that are geographically and musically fairly removed from one another – but all well worth checking out. The headliner, Cinemechanica plays fast proggy punk with no shortage of speed, intensity, and color – maybe a hybrid of Mars Volta and Victims Family (remember them?). The Deathset are a young Sydney duo that, in only a few months together, moved to States (Maryland), released an EP and a split with Best Fwends, did touring with Best Fwends and Japantown, and already have Baltimore’s happening Rabbit Foot imprint repressing their EP. The music is really spastic lo-fi electronic pop or electronic punk – but not electronic pop punk – kid of like a Japanese toy store going berserk – but a catchy chaos. Portland’s Show Me the Pink are on Chainsaw Records – who, for those with a memory, introduced Sleater-Kinney many years ago – but what holds more important here is that they put out Tracy and the Plastics – clearing the way for Show Me the Pink - who do a happy tongue-and-cheek art-school thing that people now like to call disco punk or a few years ago would’ve called electroclash – but people my age are just accustomed to calling new wave. While this kitschy genre was milked for all its worth in this town a few years ago (and will probably always exist in Berlin), you may want to give the Pink a chance because they’re one of the only ones using real drums and bass, playing super retardo, and giving off a bit of a D.I.Y. fun sloppy collective vibe that reflects the fact that they’re approaching this stuff from a completely different direction. And finally, the opener, The Stabs are also nothing to sneeze at. The Stabs are a new-ish Melbourne trio who totally embody the best elements of their country’s musical heritage (anyone who reads this knows I love an Australian-sounding Australian band) – think of a common point between Lubricated Goat, The Scientists, and Birthday Party – heavy swampy feedback-ridden plodding rock’n’roll with that special sway only they can do. There also seems to be that touch of Seattle that keeps creeping in the down under sound the last few years – but I guess that’s alright ‘cause the Aussie’s secretly invented Seattle anyway. Get there early.

EARCANDY
The Deat Set
“To”
April 2006
J.R Oliver

This was a lot of fun to listen to. Kind of sounds like X meets The Donnas. It comes with a cool and somewhat disturbing poster too. They kick things off with “Paranoia”, it’s a beach party frenzy with a catchy guitar riff and chorus. “Negative Thinking” has that same addictive urgency. It’s got an old school feel that brings to mind some of the great punk bands like the Celibate Rifles and the aforementioned X. This band makes me smile and there’s not many bands that can put a smile on a jaded old failure of a rock star like myself. Thanks guys!
THE DEATH SET

To

RAB-001

EVIL SPONGE

The Death Set - “To”

April 2006

PostLibyan

The Death Set are a two piece band apparently from Baltimore and they fall into the broad category of “electroclash”. They make spasatically energetic music out of drum machines, samples, distorted guitar, and screaming vocals. It’s catchy, angry, and fun all at the same time. I happen to enjoy this sort of thing, but then again I still listen to Black Flag records, so I appreciate the energy that anger can give to music. Others might not be so impressed, I suppose. Especially if your primary focus in music is a poetical turn of phrase and a hook-y melody. Not so much of that stuff going on here.

This is actually the second release of this EP. Apparently, The Death Set made a bunch of them and sold them at shows, then signed up with the Rabbitfoot label (which I suppose is lucky for them), and re-released it. At any rate, this is my first exposure to the band. There are 7 songs here in just under 13 minutes. Let’s briefly examine each. The To EP starts off with a heavily distorted voice saying “I can’t hear shit!” And then a drum machine kicks in for Paranoia. This song is completed by some heavily distorted vocals, a happy keyboard riff, and some crunchy Ramones-esque guitaring. Very fun.

The second song is called Negative Thinking, and a vocodered voice repeats that phrase over and over. Join that with some organy keys and a frenetic drum machine riff, and you have another fun tune.

Track three is called Intermission, and is new to the Rabbitfoot release of the EP. This is the band’s theme song, with the voice screaming “It’s the mother-fucking Death Set!” over and over during the chorus. The keys and drum machine here are the most synthpoppish on the EP, pointing towards an interesting future for the band.

On Distressed, the guitarist turns in his best licks. He plays a fast, high-pitched strumming that reminds me of Keith Levine’s work in early PiL. The drum machine also spits out a beat worthy of Topper Headon on this tune. This is a fun punk song with angry distorted voice and silly keys.

Up next is Boys and Girls. The beat here is an old 4/4 thing, all thudding drums and staccato guitar riffs, except on the chorus where everything stutters like the tape is stuck. The voice here is hard to make out, because it is so heavily distorted. In fact, the layering on this song is weird. The drum machine is the most audible thing, then the guitar, then the voice. Odd, but not bad.

The Death Set use an old school industrial clattering drum machine riff on Ohh Snap! This song is filled out with strange keyboard drones and atonal singing. It ends with some screaming and a nice guitar riff.

Finally, The Death Set end their debut with a great song called Around the World. This is a truly wonderful tune that is over far too fast in just under 2:19. The guitar plays a great bass riff almost worthy of Peter Hook himself, and two voices sing harmony in a manner that reminds me of the early work of The Poster Children. Simply catchy, frenetic, and very very fun.

This is definitely an enjoyable little EP. The music is crazy, but very catchy. The Death Set mention on their website that they are recording a full-length. I wonder if they can keep up this energy for an entire album? Personally, I hope that they can.
Sitting nervously somewhere between the outrageous, manic pop of Japanese bands like Polysics, the thrashing, eccentric beehive of bands like the B52s and Apples In Stereo, the genderless cyber punk of acts like Sigue Sigue Sputnik and the post-punk chic of The Rapture, The Death Set spit, growl and bomb their way into the headlights of an oncoming chart vehicle.

Born out of Sydney’s experimental rock outfit, Black Panda, the ‘To’ EP features just over a half dozen crazy, pop-art shredding 2 minute pops songs, each one crafted around a fiery pop anthem, a fuzzy hook, some sound clips from the sample library and a crisp, robotic beat. Yeah, they’re a fairly indistinguishable and blurry bunch of songs, but the lack of meaningful punctuation means the record coasts by with a frightening velocity, leaving you breathless, exhausted yet strangely re-energized.

Excellent stuff.

New wave meets no wave. The Death Set uses bouncy keyboard riffs and increasingly strained vocals to create a grating and exhilarating album. This disc might be that one night stand you can’t resist—even though you know you’ll be paying for it in the morning.

Manic, crazed and yet surprisingly tuneful. If I were in a sillier mood, I might call these songs goofy. But I don’t think that’s quite right. Nonetheless, these folks visit the rational world infrequently.

Which makes these songs that much more exciting. Sane people wouldn’t make stuff like this. I have to admit that guessing which mental disorder is most prevalent in the band is a lot of fun. Mania is winning out right now.

The vast majority of people will run screaming from this album. And they should. The Death Set is for true believers only. And if you can figure out exactly what to believe after hearing this set, you’re way ahead of me.
THE DEATH SET

To
RAB-001

THE DEATH SET

To

May 2006

The Death Set

“To”

May 2006

The Death Set’s two-man mini riot wield punky guitar smashing, panicky electro squawking, tinny drum machines and samples from old anti-drug videos – then they smash seven shades of shit out of them against homemade mics, drench the product in sweat, saliva and sarcastic exuberance, and allow the results to stew in their own garishly vivacious pop expressionism.

To, or you may choose to use my own suggested title “How To Smash Shit Up,” is the 7 track, 13 minute, debut release from co-guitarists and co-vocalists Beau Velasco and Johnny Siera. Originally formed in Sydney, Australia, the duo re-located to Baltimore, US of A, in search of a thriving alt. scene to embrace their brand of semi-experimental panic punk. The EP is laden with a mish mash of melodic casio beats, chanted lyrical mantras and fuzzed out guitar solos, creating a vibrant wall of catchy hooks, busy flicking pretty switches and not taking itself too seriously.

Highlight tracks such as “Negative Thinking” and the closer “Around the World” cut a smartly executed tightrope walk between Le Tigre’s whining electro pop and the now defunct Test Icicles’ raucous punk-metal vigour, only just tipping too far into unlistenable conceptualism on “Snap,” with its inserts of pneumatic drill drum machines cutting painfully into your ears followed by a neat summary of “It’s so frustrating;” “Around the World” in particular shows the Death Set’s fidgety disenchanted in its most focussed prime, with the memorably confident megalomania of “We go around the world and we do what must be done, we’re on a top secret mission and our enemies are wishin’ that they had a bigger gun” undercut by an abrasive bassline and the band’s style of genderless twin vocals whining and screaming against each other.

To works well, with a colourful short attention span being the adhesive between dirty fun punk, old grimy default electric beats and squirts of bits and bobs to compliment a pleasingly messy blend

BIG TAKEOVER

The Death Set · “To”

May 2006

Mark Suppanz

Formed in Sydney, Australia, but now based in the U.S., this duo- comprised of visual artist Beau Velasco and engineer/ "playboy" Johnny Siera- play aggressive and vigorous, yet highly infectious and hyperkinetic electronic pop//punk. Each fleeting tune (only a few crack the two-minute mark) features raw ‘n’ dirty keyboards, fuzzed –out guitars, distorted and occasionally shouted vocals, and intermittent but well-integrated samples. Sometimes they bring to mind a trashier cross between The Rezillos and Devo (the EP’s most hummable track “Intermission,” even recalls Toni Basil’s “Mickey!”). At other times, they hint at the harsh, piledriving attack of Wire’s most recent output especially on punkier tunes “Distressed” and “Boys/Girls.” This is guaranteed to have you dancing around the room and perhaps even breaking a few household items in the process.
THE DEATH SET
To
RAB-001

RAZORCAKE
The Death Set (LIVE)
“To”
May 2006
Joe Evans

So everyone knew that Lifetime was going to be playing a huge festival at Giants Stadium. It was one of those things that everyone inevitably complains about when any band goes and does things. However, not as many people knew that they’d also be playing a smaller show the day before, at a venue just slightly more intimate than an arena parking lot. How I knew about it, I’m not even that sure myself, but it was certainly worth dragging myself up out of bed early on a Saturday morning (not for cartoons, for once) to catch a train down.

The Unlovables went on first, and I was pretty bummed that I missed the first few songs of their set, since it was so crowded and slow to get downstairs to the show space. Fortunately, I still managed to catch most of the set, so I was happy about that. They’re a great pop punk band, “traditional” without being completely derivative like a lot of other bands, and “modern” without sounding like the kind of garbage that filled up the festival that Lifetime was playing the next day. Does all of that make sense? I hope so, because The Unlovables are pretty awesome, and I would like to get that point across.

There was another opening band called The Death Set. This was interesting. It’s pretty hard to even try to describe them. Okay, you know those big arcade dancing games? Okay, you know how they have games like that, but instead of dancing, you play these novelty guitars? That’s what they were like. That, with gangsta rap beats. I’m dead serious.

If nothing, Lifetime is a weird band. Well, at least not musically. Musically, they’re a hardcore band, who instead opts for a more positive, poppy take as opposed to the rest of their bone-headed contemporaries from the early ‘90s (or, for the sake of argument, also the “I hate everything” metal-core bands of today). The weird part has been the wide scale of reactions they’ve had over the years. They made it from “Eh, this band sucks,” all the way to, “This is one of the greatest bands, ever,” shortly before ending things in the late ‘90s. Still a popular topic of conversation even after having broken up (the fact that members went on to form Kid Dynamite, Zero Zero, Paint It Black, and others probably didn’t hurt this), the general consensus seemed to be “Well, sure it would be great to see them again, but it would have to be something like a basement show, or it would suck—and there’s no way that’ll ever happen.” Sure enough, there were constant bumps and nudges urging them to reunite, to the point where it seemed like every new band on the radio or MTV was saying, “You know who we owe our being in a band to? Lifetime.” Finally, after a mess of an incident known as Hellfest, the band finally decided to permanently regroup and go back into the crazy world we all know as punk rock the best they could.

(Quick tangent: Remember a few years ago, when Jade Tree Records pulled the April fool’s joke saying Lifetime were recording a new album called Please Stop Ripping Off Our Riffs a few years ago? Dear Lifetime: I would like to insist that you call your next record Please Stop Ripping Off Our Riffs. That is all. Thank you.)

Anyway, after a short wait, Lifetime finally got ready to play, and ended up playing a pretty good chunk of their discography for close to an hour. It’s always a pretty cool feeling seeing a celebrated band, in essentially a hometown setting, let alone in a tiny, packed bar basement (furthermore, seeing them in a tiny,
packed bar basement the day before they’d be playing on the main stage at a huge festival, probably fifteen feet away from the crowd). Things began with some very atmospheric feedback and started with “Turnpike Gates.” There were some technical issues at times, like some faulty guitar cables, but no one really seemed to mind. In fact, I was actually really surprised at how calm the crowd was overall. Granted, people were jumping up and down, singing along as loud as they could, but only one person fell on top of me (not that I’m complaining). All in all, it was a great show, combined with having time to eat the horrendously delicious food New Brunswick has to offer (spend a day there, you’ll know what I mean), made it one of those shows that leaves you thinking, “I’m glad I got into this crazy stuff.”

ANTIMUSIC
The Death Set
“To”
May 2006
Eric Bodrero

My goodness, I’ve never come across a band that I so quickly fell in love with like I have The Death Set. This quick little ten-minute EP simply titled To has more substance and bizarre, attractive instrumentation and songwriting than a lot of full length albums that run over an hour. The Death Set combine punk riffs with spazzy, experimental indie math rock and sharp, biting lyrics that are mostly yelled to give you the most energetic, raucous and untamed ten minutes of your life.

Check out the ultra-catchy, burned-on-your-mind forever “Negative Thinking” that will have you mindlessly singing the chorus for days after hearing it. Or delve a little deeper into the eccentric and out-of-control “Snap”, which mixes a semi-decent drum beat and bass line with sporadic explosions of machine-gun drum beatings and keyboard grinding throughout its whopping one minute and thirteen seconds. For a tamer listen try the closer “Around the World”, which reminds me of early Sigue Sigue Sputnik and is one of the softer things you’ll likely hear from this band.

Yet despite all the spasmatism (yeah, I made that one up), The Death Set has this uncanny ability to rock you gently with a user-friendly and supple synth beat throughout. I dare you to give these guys a try. As for me, I’ll be the first in line at the record store when they release new material, which, at the quick pace they’re rocking to on this EP, should be often. For fans of Animal Collective and Deerhoof.
THE DEATH SET

To
RAB-001

NEW YORK NIGHT TRAIN
The Death Set - “To”
June 2006

Really sticky speedy spazzy pop defined by tuneful high-pitched screaming, distorted guitars, and Casios blasting over rigid new wavy machine beats. The Death Set’s debut EP is the giddiest wall-bouncing sugar overdose that’s come my way in some time. To goes down like a mix of three balloons full o’nitrous and three more full o’helium. These Australia to Baltimore transplants sound like a faster, popper, and more-straightforward Devo for 21st Century attention spans. It’ll make you jump up and down and pound your head against the wall with delight.

Also, hats off to the RabbitFoot for their cool and elaborate packaging which features singer/guitarist Beau Velasco’s art on both the cover and the foldout poster within. This is RabbitFoot’s first release and I hope they keep the goodies coming.

My only complaint is that it didn’t take long devour all six of these syrupy nuggets. I know it ain’t no good for me but I’m still hungry and I gotta couple o’cavity-free teeth ready and willing… More please.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN
The Death Set - “To”
June 2006
Chris Sabbath

This remastered EP from the Baltimore–via–Sydney, Australia, duo bubbles up with a potent concoction of breakneck electro-punk and thigh-slapping charisma faster then you can say “Kathleen Hanna, take a hint already.” The Death Set playfully tear through “Paranoia” with zingy synth whirs and squawking singalongs while the agitated guitar riffs and muffled samples of “Intermission” echo the Go! Team trading licks with the Polysics.

THE ORGAN MAGAZINE
The Death Set - “To”
June 2006

ALBUM OF THE WEEK
THE DEATH SET – To (Rabbitfoot) – They’re originally from Australia, this (so it seems) is their U.S debut, seven track mini album of scuzzi DIY fuzzy spiky lo-fi new wave analogue drum-box driven pop that comes over like a few more welcoming Bis. High speed boingo-boingo pop art tantrums and lots of attitude (and bratty girl/boy voices) that they know they’re easily good enough to get away with. Aggressively sweet, like sucking delicious boiled sweets and expecting the bits of glass – for fans of Lightning Bolt, Deerhoof and the Dub Narcotic Sound System. www.deathset.com
VERBICIDE
The Death Set - “To”
Jennifer Swan
June 2006

Maybe my odd attraction to The Death Set started when I caught a glimpse of their vivid, morbid cover artwork by band member and visual artist Beau Velasco, and fell immediately in love. Perhaps this strange devotion to The Death Set derived from their resemblance to a now disbanded local band called Venus Diode, in which I still long for. Okay, let’s face it: I took a liking to The Death Set simply because they make me dance around my bedroom like a fanatical nut. Originally formed in Sydney, Australia, To is the band’s debut EP in the United States and features seven short, fast, synthesizer-heavy tracks often described as “digitized robot nightmares” If this is the case, these hypothetical nightmares would include visions of pixie sticks, energy drinks, large, gnarly, leafless trees, cloudy night skies, full moons, and helium balloons. Velasco, along with Johnny Siera, sing together in shrill, high-pitched voices that at times remind me of Gravy Train, at others, Melt Banana, and even sometimes, The Locust. Dig highly infectious, dark and insightful electronic dance tracks? Pick this CD up immediately, weirdo!

PUNK NEWS
The Death Set - “To”
August 2006

The Death Set are a band that really knows how to pack it in. No, no, not like that, you sick bastard. What I was actually getting at is the remarkable ability to pack what seems like an absurd amount of music into a mere twelve minutes time.

In a more schizophrenic 7-song album than I think I’ve ever heard, the Death Set cascade through 7 tracks that average about a minute and a half apiece with an absolute reckless abandon. Each and every one are full of wailing garage rock vocals, fuzz-laden chord progressions, and the occasional inclusion of some quirky synth work. And as obnoxious a combination as that sounds like, it actually comes across quite well.

The attitude on a song like “Snap” is what really sells this band. The spunky female vocals over the bouncy bassline is just too catchy to deny. The delivery is quick and effective, with the jagged riffing really pushing the pace of the song along well. The followup, “Boys/Girls,” is the band at their most spastic. The lead synth line is extremely quick, and it integrates well with the rest of the song, the vocals being much more angry and screamy than anywhere previously displayed on the album.

Not much to say here. Short, loud, fast, and full of attitude.