



## Clang Quartet -- Jihad

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good & acceptable & perfect.

Clang Quartet is not a band, but a one-man performance art/percussion/passion play project by Scotty Irving (drummer for Geezer Lake, Eugene Chadbourne, Elvis X, & others). Since the first show in January of 1997, the performances have been & continue to be almost completely improvisational; but with the recording & release of the first Clang Quartet CD, a different Clang Quartet has appeared.

The CD **Jihad** (a Muslim term for holy war) features a varied array of instruments (drums, guitars, & keyboards) & non-instruments (an electrified hand saw/stapler/water bottle combination, a bell & finger cymbal covered hockey mask (shake face), cicadas...) all played by Irving. The recording catches the improvisational nature of the live shows while introducing the listener to the other sides of the Clang Quartet persona. Sound collages are built on family tape recordings from family gatherings in Irving's childhood dating back to 1977 & played through a small mountain of electronic effects. Irving's voice appears as various characters & gives more accessibility with the non-noise enthusiasts having something to concentrate on. The song structures that do appear somewhere beneath the collages fall into a category between heavy metal & post-rock held all together as a coherent mass by Irving's percussion that owes debts to free jazz & experimental music.

**Jihad** is an audio exorcism. An uneasy but rewarding listen. Like the road less traveled by, the trail is more treacherous but makes the destination all the more rewarding.



*"This one man percussion project is the brainchild of one Scotty Irving. Each "song" features Scotty on various percussion and found instruments playing some really interesting stuff to say the least. These out of this world sound collages are downright WEIRD."* – Faze 3 Magazine

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“A collection of experimental sound collages that incorporate a wild collection of found instruments; such as a hockey mask covered with finger cymbals & bells, a broken cymbal that is beaten & sawed, a handsaw, stapler, & water bottles. These sounds are manipulated & often feature highly confessional spoken word pieces. Irving has a lot of talent & is utterly sincere; but I have to confess, I found something disturbing about his work.”

-- Drum!

“Clang Quartet is not a quartet, but it (or he) is clangy indeed. The project is the creation of Scotty Irving, former drummer of Geezer Lake & current drummer for Elvis X, two alternative prog-metal groups from Greensboro. For a couple of years now, Irving has also been performing as the Clang Quartet, an act in which he steps from behind the drum kit & basically uses a bunch of found items as percussion. He is also a born again Christian, & Clang Quartet, rather than being a band, is a performance piece based on the life of Christ. Irving’s local performances have become semilegendary because he becomes so crazed & so spontaneous -- yelling, jumping up & down, beating on various objects with all the force he can muster – that you can’t help but become uneasy while watching him. He seems to be on the verge of completely losing his mind. Plus, many of the concepts behind the piece are fairly lofty – even for people with a strong Christian background. I saw him perform the piece twice & didn’t realize it was a christian allegory until he told me. As you’d expect, listening to Clang Quartet on CD isn’t nearly as riveting as watching him perform it live. However, rather than just record the piece as it was, Irving wisely opted to explore the limits of recording & in the process created a piece that’s significantly different from its live counterpart. Irving experiments with tape loops, effects, found sounds, nature recordings, guitar, organ, &, of course, percussion. It’s still difficult to listen to these songs & derive their Christian meanings. But, with the CD at least, you can read the titles of each song (many have Bible verses for titles) & at least have a clue to go on.

-- The Independent

“I’ll start the review by quoting Scotty Irving (aka Clang Quartet) himself: “The average Christian will probably have a big problem with something like this because they have an idea of what a song is & what isn’t.” That being said, this isn’t your typical collection of pop or rock songs, on the contrary this is something utterly original. Clang Quartet blends visceral sounds assembled from regular instruments like guitars, drums, & keyboard with a somewhat primordial & “what’s available at the moment” kind of instrumentation ranging from the electrified hand saw to the bell & finger cymbal covered hockey mask. **Jihad** is basically 66 minutes of free & imaginative sound collages with underlying structures, may it be the pulsing electronics that tease your senses & ear drums all the way through “Idiot” or the fuzzy guitar attacks of the quite wonderful “Jihad – Round 2.” Sources & means may vary, but Irving can look down with pride on this accomplished work. This is as hinted above not an easy record to get into but the time it takes to do so will seem well invested when you look back at things in a couple weeks time.”

-- The Broken Face