



X-Bax Aokigahara

X-Bax is the (mostly) solo experimental outlet of Phil Dole. Launched in 2004 after a weekend spent immersed in a borrowed copy of *Earth 2*, Phil was determined to strip down & explore ideas he'd been thinking about for years, but had no other place to explore them. The first recording, *In Search Of The Brown Note*, was seen as an experiment in frequency & texture culminating in a 32-minute sludgy guitar drone. The notoriety of *Brown Note* may have had as much to do with its scatological cross-marketing as with the audio itself, but it caught the attention of a number of guitar players in Chicago who were in the process of forming a massive "drone collective" called Chord. Phil was asked to participate & over time the collective evolved into a 5-piece power-ambient group that has since recorded for Neurot Recordings, Important Records, & others. Dole relocated to Los Angeles in 2010, but still works with Chord & has spent more time recording & performing as X-Bax as well as sporadic work as part of the duo Dots. The entire X-Bax back-catalog (excluding *Aokigahara*) is slated for a single repackaged release in 2015 called *Box*.

The *Aokigahara* EP was recorded specifically for Silber Records' 5in5 series. X-Bax recordings are always initiated by an overlying constraint, & doing 5 tracks with a total running time of 5 minutes provided the framework. Thematically, the tracks draw their inspiration from cutting edge Japanese cinema & the grey area between longing & death. The EP's title refers to a forest near Mt. Fuji that is a suicide destination for the Japanese. The pieces vary from mind-melting drones ("Gozu The Killer") to angular aggression ("Yakuza"). Drone on & bang your head.



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