

A Note on Noise and Mosquitoes

The mosquitoes in Guyana are worse than I ever expected, or could ever know would exist anywhere on this planet. They are bloodsuckers with a vengeance, the true earthly vampires. Inexperienced and ripe with rosy blood passing through me, somehow I managed to trap an entire battalion on the inner side of the mosquito netting encompassing my bed, as I dozed off into another climate induced lethargy. In the night I woke with itchy, clustered red spots all about my ankles, and a social gathering of the fattest black mosquitoes I'd ever seen, humming in their content like a Chevelle with an exhaust mod. They were seemingly unaware of being trapped on my side of the net, or were simply comfortable enough to die in a food induced pleasure coma.

I crushed as many as I could from inside, smearing my blood in my palms and not looking a victor, but kind of stupid for not realizing that would happen. Seeing how many got me, I'm actually feeling better about DEETing myself into a personal silent spring when they come to cloud my body again.

And then, as if on cue, mourning the deaths of the mosquitoes, the rains came, banging out every last decibel hidden in the wavy sheets of zinc and tin amalgam which make up the roof.

It is so loud, I am sensory deprived. I cannot hear the click click click my fingers sinking in the keys on my chiclet keyboard, nor can I really feel their impact on my fingertips. If the mosquitoes were a Chevelle, the beat of a South American torrent on a zinc roof is the 1883 Krakatoa Volcano explosion remixed by Merzbow. The tin roof above me head is almost certainly making a death rattle, not my death rattle but the end of days as we know it.

But my host father has a different opinion.

He says a night rain is soothing for a Guyanese, a serenade from mother nature. I can see where he's coming from, rain does cast that refreshing ionization in the air as it simultaneously drives the temperature down. There aren't many days here cold enough to use the top sheet to bundle up with. When they do come, the sensation is like draping a quilt over your body before a warm fire in a thick snow.

I've heard it said about Merzbow and other noise rock, the redeeming quality of the art is how it forces one to listen. It's overwhelming sound so envelopes you, your mind gives up its discerning ways and you sink deep into it, cast away from the pedestrian aural qualities of melody and rhythm. "Sink deep into it" might be what my host father was telling me, let it overcome you.

Ok, I thought with the bleating white noise above my head: Is it possible Guyana could be an unaccredited originator of such a philosophy? Is it possible to sink into something so overwhelming?

And then, somewhere amidst, I feel asleep.