

**“Evaporate into Surround Sound Air,” RES. February/March issue. 2005.
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In the six sonically refashioned video clips that make up the Dolby 5.1 DVD EVAPORATED MUSIC, Australian composer/filmmaker (The Sound of Milk, Descore, Body Melt, Salt Saliva Sperm & Sweat) Philip Brophy performs masterful operations of granular trans-audiovision on the pop icons we love to hate. The image tracks from music videos of Elton John, Billy Joel, Phil Collins (male Parts 1a-c), Gloria Estefan, Celine Dion, and Mariah Carey (female Parts 1d-f) are taken whole, their music erased and rescored. The entirely new cinematic sound design takes its cues from all that is performative in music—human voice, breath, fuzz-boxes, microphone-angles, diaphragms, spittle, amp-hums, snare-pops—and synchs to every on-screen movement. Part sono-musical “portrait,” part pop culture parody, Brophy co-joins pre-existing imagery with original sound, to both volatile and vitriolic effect.

As a series EVAPORATED MUSIC eschews traditional notions of the cut-up technique pioneered by Gysin and Burroughs and perfected via the accelerated montage of MTV, opting instead for a kind of lamination between cinematic sound and image that takes advantage of the base power of music: its unilateral, multi-dimensional aura. Sound ruptures gesture and revels in the vapor. As Brophy notes, “EVAPORATED MUSIC is based on video clips that desperately try to be ‘cinematic’ through their narrative aping—but fail gloriously.”

Terrorized by the groans and glares of pop stars stripped bare audiences may be left wondering what comes next in the evolution of the surround sound series. Death metal compositions, of course. Scored to carefully curated scenes from late 1980s/early 90s Disney-style family films featuring instances of Mom and Pop forming a rock band, EVAPORATED MUSIC 2 gives voice to what Brophy considers the most-silenced form of popular music—metal in all its guises. “My intention,” he writes, “is to amplify it in places where it is most unwelcome.” Monster pop as plastic surgery has never looked, nor sounded, so good.

Philip Brophy will be in New York City in March promoting his new book, *100 Modern Soundtracks*, published by the British Film Institute, London.