Request Hour

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Recommended Citation
Rothman, Wesley (2016) "Request Hour," Booth: Vol. 8 : Iss. 8 , Article 1.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.butler.edu/booth/vol8/iss8/1

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Request Hour

Abstract
Give me a set list of wrecking ball bass, boxer fists laced,

Give me jackhammer & TNT...

Cover Page Footnote
"Request Hour" was originally published at Booth.
Give me a set list of wrecking ball bass, boxer fists laced,
Give me jackhammer & TNT. Give me a bullet screaming
At itself to halt, backtrack, re-jacket, melt down. Give me
The self, deconstructed, its blueprints in sound waves.
Break it down with liner notes, then cut-up, mix & remix
& remix the remix. Give me beats larger than longing —
Wider, longer, deeper. There, in your reflecting glass,
Spin a track with my sweat & desperate prayers. Etch me
Into vinyl, then defile the groove. Now is the hour
My tearing down — the record written in the sky —
Finally topples me. This tune must become an anthem,
Must whir & thunder as blood still cooped, manifesting.
Amplify the lowest lowdown notes, no’s, & nonsense
I’ve thumped, the loudmouth breakings I’ve trumped,
The hardest bass lines I’ve missed. Soundproof me,
Deposit every sound there is, in me. All my prayers
Are tucked in my dancing shoes. Leave me to reckon
The base of faith. Fashion me an ear-shaped heart,
A playback button & a mixtape. Please, give me something
Worth giving. Where to? If you hold the mic, who holds you?

Wesley Rothman’s poems and criticism have appeared in Boston Review, Callaloo, Copper Nickel, Gulf Coast, Harvard Review, New England Review, and Prairie Schooner, among other venues. His debut collection, SUBWOOFER, is forthcoming from New Issues Poetry and Prose. He is a Teaching Fellow at The Catholic University of America.