

THE CASSETTES

'Neath The Pale Moon

The Cassettes are Washington D.C.'s premier "vaudeville steampunk" band. This "Musical Explorers Society" is fronted by Mr. Shelby Cinca, formerly the voice and guitar behind such notable D.C. groups as Frodus and Decahedron. He has also been the man responsible for recording various instantly classic D.C. indie albums such as Dead Meadow's first two full lengths. But don't be fooled into thinking there is any sort of punk/hard-core/post-punk tomfoolery happening here. The sound of The Cassettes strolls lavishly down the "Rocky Raccoon" / "Honey Pie" path that some could describe as synth-infused country stomp folk. Joining Shelby in his vision of pushing musical boundaries and expectations is Stephen Guidry on squeezebox and moog, Saadat Awan on drums and tablas, and an extensive cast of banjo, theremin, and saw players.

Cinca's long experience as a musician as well as his extensive time behind the recording console enabled the band to utilize the intimacy of home-recordings for songs such as "Sway Along". However, for the bigger sounds of songs such as "Lady Faire" and "Burgalar in the Bungalow," they turned to other producers and a variety of environments, including Silver Sonya's Chad Clark (Beauty Pill, The Dismemberment Plan's "Emergency and I" and "Change") and T.J. Lipple (Aloha). In particular, the band turned to their quasi-guru Jonathan Kreinik (boomboxmagnetica.com), whose deft hand can be felt on such recordings as Frodus' "Conglomerate International", and Trans Am's "Futureworld". Kreinik holed up for over a month in New York City, attempting to (among other things) encapsulate in sound the mind of Arthur Harrison, the band's erstwhile thereminist and occasional vocalist.

But enough with these details... "What of the album itself?", you surely ask. No album can be adequately summed up in few words on a one-sheet, of course, but The Cassettes have provided us with an album that could provide enough copy for an entire pamphlet, perhaps printed by ink-stained partisans in the cellar of a deserted tavern. For there are hints of revolution here: the lyrics' subtle dissatisfaction with mechanized, modernist life, the linear notes' demand for a re-examination of everyday objects, although the message is perhaps diffused by mere words, and rather taken up sonically by the band. A sort of manifesto of music, then, as what the album lacks in verbal "messages," it makes up for in music of a variety enough to broaden the mind of the listener. (Indeed!... indeed.)

"'Neath The Pale Moon" might be signposted as the early stages of whatever next phase or era the band is now proclaiming to have begun. And yet, this exploratory variety does not mean the tracks don't make sense all pushed or pulled together into one experience, as it were. Rather, the Ganges River Delta Blues of "Muja Chi Larki Daydo" fits right alongside the more traditional porch-song "Sweet Virginia". If you consider yourself as someone with that of an adventurous and broad musical palette, this album is a journey of musical exploration well-worth taking.



KEY MARKETS: Washington DC (hometown), Los Angeles CA, Austin TX, New York NY, Chicago IL, Seattle WA, Boston MA, San Francisco CA, Orlando FL

FOR FANS OF: *Traditional Folk and Blues, The Beatles, Dune, Elvis Presley, Dolly Parton, Twin Peaks, Neutral Milk Hotel, Johnny Cash, Captain Harlock, Noor Jehan, G.K. Chesterton, Moh'd Rafi, Deadwood, Mercedes Sosa, Brazil, 16 Horsepower, Cesaria Evora, UHF, Amadou & Mariam, The Divine Comedy, Leon Theremin, Lothar & The Hand People, Last Exile, Carnivale, Baby Gramps, Mad Max, Jules Verne, Al Jolson, H.G. Wells, Dead Meadow, Blur, Jhumpa Lahiri, Neal Stephenson, Bolivia, Gnomes*



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"'Neath The Pale Moon" CD

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TRACK LISTING

- 01 Lady Faire
- 02 Loveless Lady
- 03 Small & Tired
- 04 Muja Chi Larki Daydo
- 05 Sweet Virginia
- 06 Burgalar in the Bungalow
- 07 Time Ain't Right
- 08 Be Quite Still
- 09 Sway Along
- 10 Our Whispers Wake No Clocks
- 11 Rogue Gnome
- 12 Lonesome Wind
- 13 South Arlington Life
- 14 The Stage Fades



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