

Mp3 Fortress Madonna - One Hundred Beacons



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Featuring members of revered UK pop janglers, The Dentists, Fortress Madonna have forged a unique psychedelic guitar pop sound. 12 MP3 Songs POP: British Pop, ROCK: Psychedelic Details: One Hundred Beacons is the first album by Fortress Madonna. The driving force in the band is Alex Serikov. Born in 1972, he excelled in gymnastics and represented Russia in the 1988 Olympics. Injury ended Alex's gymnastics career and after studying English at university, he was recruited by the KGB. Years of isolation and secrecy drew the harsh realities of Alex's life to paper. The songs are webbed in his experiences - the suspicious circumstances surrounding the death of Tom's sister (and who exactly is Tom you may well ask), the graceful prostitutes of Tverskaya, his subjective life in Uganda and much more than can possibly be detailed here. Together with Nick Morwood, former brainchild behind The Impossible Shake, Mick Murphy, lyricist and singer from Coax and The Dentists and the effervescing talents of Brian Sullivan from The Brian Sullivan Experiment, Alex devoted his time in the UK to sieving his thoughts and ideas into the heads of his shadows. One Hundred Beacons sounds totally unique. Think guitars. Think melodies. Think a deliciously memorable collection of short, powerful songs filtered through Russian and British sensibilities and you're starting to get the picture. REVIEWS "The debut album from Fortress Madonna is an emotional, politically charged bottle rocket, full of Oasis-like sneering and Posies-like harmonies. Named after a symbol of hope drawn on the back of a map for the German soldiers fighting in Stalingrad, the record exudes defiance reminiscent of early U2. Reluctant leader (and former Russian Olympic gymnast and KGB agent) Alexander Serikov, whose only credit on the record is cello, leads a rotating 11-member band through the beautiful, heartbreaking, and excruciatingly unfair world around him. Serikov, who died in March 2002 while climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, was, to say the least, an enigma. Like Joe Strummer before him, he adopted a religiously global view of society and applied it

to his songwriting, all the while leaving a trail of myth that few have been able to piece together.

Beginning with "Serikov" (unrelated), a fuzzy, guitar-fueled romp about a real-life World War II vet who ends up freezing to death while begging beneath a Kremlin underpass, the band rips through ten more tunes without abandon. "Speedo Chill" sounds like an angrier James and the brutal "Shine" could be an outtake from Julian Cope's *Peggy Suicide*. Halfway through, the tunes begin treading water, losing the dangerous ebb and flow of the first six tracks and veering into stale Brit-pop territory before being rescued by the beautiful "Swerve to Collapse." With instrumentation ranging from the standard four-piece rock setup to trumpet, sax, violin, and balalaika, Fortress Madonna is surprisingly lean on the arrangements, enabling them to convey a lyrical presence often underplayed by similar bands. *One Hundred Beacons* is an ambitious mess, and, unfortunately, an unintended memorial to a mysterious man soon to become a cult hero." 4 stars - AMG All Music Guide

"Alex Serikov. Born 1972. Gymnast. Represents Russia in the 1988 Olympics. Studies English at University and is then recruited by the KGB. No, this isn't the plot for the new Bond film but it certainly isn't your average band bio either. It's an incredible story but why is he only credited with the cello on the sleeve? Irrespective of this, Serikov, along with a cast of 15 other musicians has created a psychedelic power pop collection to treasure. The guitars and harmonies of "Serikov" shimmer and soar in all the right places and "Fastest Loser" hurtles along, the guitars frantically trying to keep up with the vocals and only just managing it. The perfect pop of the all too short "Diminish" and "Volga" slow the pace down a little but it's only a brief respite with the punk-pop rush of "Hit the Ground" upping the volume again. It's not clear who plays or sings what on what from the album's credits but when it's this good, who cares?... Oh, and it's on *Laughing Outlaw* too, which is fast becoming a guarantee of quality. So what are you waiting for?" 4 stars - Americana-UK Website

"Believe what you want about Fortress Madonna but know this: *One Hundred Beacons* is a terrific collection of alterna-rock. With the attitude of the Fall and a grasp of melody reminiscent of Mercury Rev, Fortress Madonna plough through these invigorating guitar-driven tunes with gusto. It's not just heads-down power strumming, either. There's plenty of variety here, from the gripping *Fastest Loser* to the buoyant, jangling *Shine* to the sensitive *The 'D' Connection*, a gorgeous blend of acoustic and electric guitars. One of the best things any album can do is surprise you - whether its makers are globally successful or unknown - and beneath the superficiality of its unimpressive packaging and questionable band history, *One Hundred Beacons* certainly does that." - ALBUM OF THE WEEK, Sydney Morning Herald

"The lyrics ("webbed around

Serikov's experiences") veer from fantastical adventures to the mundane realities of everyday life, while the musical settings alternately gently caress and brutally assault the listener. The eminently catchy One Hundred Beacons moves briskly from bright, strummy pop ("Serikov", "Volga") to elegiac ballads ("The 'D' Connection", "Swerve to Collapse") to head-banging punk ("Hit The Ground", "Outside is Fine Through These Glasses of Mine"), with further detours along the way. Special mention must also go to Morwood's Pavement-like "Speedo Chill", "Shine", a resplendent slice of jangle heaven, and the pulsating "On A Clear Day, I Can See Tomorrow", all of which are instantly elevated by Collins' powerful guitar work." - Pop Culture Press "Fortress Madonna features a star-studded cast of underground celebrities. The band includes Alex Serikov, Mick Murphy and Bob Collins (from The Dentists), Nick Morwood (from The Impossible Shake), and Brian Sullivan (from The Brian Sullivan Experiment). The band's diverse personnel may help to explain their strangely chameleon-like sound. Unlike most bands that have one sound and overall idea...these folks' music presents a sweeping range of influences. Russian-born Serikov, the band's leading force, once represented his home country in the Olympics...and he was later recruited by the KGB...and now he's fronting a rock band (?!?). One Hundred Beacons is an instantly likable and quite hummable collection of pop tunes. Serikov's vocals sound amazingly American...as do many of his tunes. The recordings, appropriately, lack the overly glossy production that hampers so many modern recordings...instead utilizing only the essential elements necessary in order to get the point across. This is a direct album that gets better with repeated spins. Includes cool hummable rockers like "Speedo Chill," "Volga," "Hit the Ground," and "Glass of Mine." (Rating: 4+++)

- BabySue.com "On One Hundred Beacons they show a propensity for gutsy, Go-Betweenesy guitar pop ('Volga' is a close approximation of 'Lighting Fires'), but other reference points are Laughing Clowns ('Shine') and Hoodoo Gurus (singer/bassist Nick Norwood comes on like Dave Faulkner on 'Outside Is Fine Through These Glasses Of Mine'). Part classic Australian pop-rock, part like a British band completely untouched by the Britpop revolution, One Hundred Beacons is an interesting concoction." - Time Off Magazine

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