Mp3 Caramelize - Thank You, Uncle Tom



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Irreverent Latin indie rock (in English Spanish) from Brooklyn with hip hop electronic flavors and tasty harmonies. 10 MP3 Songs LATIN: Rock en Espanol, POP: Quirky Details: Kevin Amorim, "New York Newsday": "A genre-jumping, Latin-rock good time. Crazy, sexy and coolisimo." Chuck Eddy, "Village Voice": "This cross-culturally eccentric Brooklyn guartet (half male, half female; two Chicanos, two half-black/half-Jewish siblings) sing about allergies and Colin Powell's eyes and super-sized fries, and draw inspiration from eat-your-peas conscious rappers and white-bread indie-pop and the more atmospheric end of Mexican and Colombian rock. ...they sound warm, maybe even hot, when they emote en espaol or add saxes or nibble your earlobes." Fabio LaRocka, "Hoy": "Caramelize's sound is the pure reflection that what's mestizo (racially mixed) is beautiful by definition." Jess Olvera, "Al Borde": "...One of the most successful bilingual efforts we've found. ... Navigating between two languages, 'Thank You, Uncle Tom' goes from an organic rock to one that borrows electronic elements and that strolls between mid-tempo hip hop and songs that have grunge and 80's rock references with everything including riffs of the B52s type (with a similar vocal style)." Chingao, people! It's time to suit up and join Caramelize's Spanglish Rock Revolution. Looking to spread its patented "sticky brown sound" across the globe, Caramelize has just issued "Thank You, Uncle Tom" (on the head fulla brains label). The 10-track debut encapsulates the Brooklyn band's deep interest in social justice, scorched love affairs and abuelita's recipe for the perfect flan. Caramelize fuses unabashed lefty politics with a fierce sense of humor that finds them dissing Colin Powell ("The Caramel Eyes Song") while worshipping the earlobe as the ultimate sexual fetish ("Los Lobulos"). Even the album's cover mixes serious social issues with irreverence, as the band members are depicted as characters in Harriet Beecher Stowe's abolitionist treatise, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." [more on the cover concept at the bottom...] The band's sound draws equally from Anglo

influences such as Radiohead and the Pixies, Latinos like Aterciopelados and Caf Tacvba, as well as the banging hip hop of Dr. Dre. That eclectic approach is no surprise given the band's multi-culti background -Sandra Velsquez and El Chapuln are Chicano (the angry version of Mexican-American); siblings Hillary Maroon and J Why are biracial African-American Jews. On "Uncle Tom," you can hear the band match Norteo-style strumming with electronic blips and burbles, Latin-flavored grooves with blasts of lo-fi, alt-rock furor. Caramelize had its first incarnation when Sandra met Hillary and J at the Cal Arts School of Music near Los Angeles. Sandra and Hillary briefly led a band called M'ija (produced by studio wiz J) and after graduation all three moved to Brooklyn. There, they cooked up a new recipe: Caramelize. After recording "Uncle Tom," the trio sought to expand its live sound and added the mysterious El Chapuln. "Thank You, Uncle Tom" was produced by the group, engineered by Bruce Winter (sideman and producer for Toad the Wet Sprocket), and features guest appearances by multi-instrumentalist Gabe McNair (No Doubt, Green Day) and Tom Lackner (Headless Household, Warm Guns). Live, the band's sound is occasionally rounded out by electronic music maestro Michael Dillon (aka Naifian) and a host of other friends. Acclaimed comic book author Jason Lutes ("Berlin," "Jar of Fools") provided the artwork for the CD booklet. The graphic narrative recalls that, despite his later vilification, Stowe's Uncle Tom was a pacifist resister of slavery who gave his life to insure the escape of two fugitive women. The changing meaning of Uncle Tom over time is being re-examined by some bold writers and theater companies. This American hero/villain's shape-shifting history intrigued Caramelize... but we also recorded "Thank You, Uncle Tom" at Sandra's Uncle Tom's studio, and are indeed, very thankful to him.

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