

Mp3 Carquinez Straits - Where The Freeways Arc Over The Burnt Edges



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Crooked narratives baked in roots-rock psychedelia. 10 MP3 Songs ROCK: Roots Rock, ROCK: Psychedelic Details: It once seemed unimaginable that space would be so precious in the vast, open stretches of the West. Now people scurry about like ants, bumping heads but moving too quickly to the next point to say, "pardon." It's on this worn slab of burned out cities and burned out people that Carquinez Straits tries to carve out its own piece of charred brisket. Formed in 1999, Carquinez Straits is Jed Brewer (voc/gtr), Greg Hain (bass/voc), Mark Searle (gtr), and Paul Takushi (drums). Among other bands, the members have done time in Harvester (DGC) and Chance the Gardener (Warner Bros.) The band released its debut CD, *The Flat Earth Just Got Flatter* in 2002. *Where The Freeways Arc Over The Burnt Edges* takes the band's roots rock psychedelia through a few more chapters of wobbly narratives. Reference points include Pendleton and Portland, OR, Fort Bragg, CA, as well as midtown Sacramento. These character sketches are framed in an album that swings back and forth between forlorn twang and sideways pop that isn't afraid to hang onto one chord for a while. Recorded at Futility Sound in West Sacramento, the album is more texturally rich than its predecessor. Review from Culture Bunker: CARQUINEZ STRAITS "Where The Freeways Are Over The Burnt Edges" - Lather Records Tightening up their meanderings and bringing more rock to the table on this new album, northern California's Carquinez Straits hone their psychedelic folk rock into a broader, more accomplished product. The uncertainties of the first album are mostly left in the dust. In 2004 the 'Straits seek a firmer hold of the sprawling, loose limbed country feedback they presented two years ago. The difference seems to be in that they let the uptempo songs crash about and keep the slower songs introspective. There was a sporadic appearance last time of hewing too closely to the folk idiom, and now they seem a lot more

comfortable in their own delivery. Their combination of laconic Gram Parsons verses with dusty and feedback laden chorus on "Faint," suggest a hybridization of Sonic Youth and Lazy Cowgirls. Their musical tastes are referenced more clearly this time around, in that they are showing they are aware that country rock is not the rallying cry of today's youth. I'm impressed with the loping, Stonesy guitar licks that pepper the songs without pushing too far into the foreground. There might be some lapsteel guitars in there too, and the sliding notes build a warm cradle for the sentiment of "Pendleton." Singer Jed Brewer has gotten a better idea of how to use his range and lets the idiosyncrasies of his voice become the selling point. On many songs his voice sounds not entirely unlike the ironic voice of They Might Be Giants. As usual, the band is in top form and each of the rave-ups and sun-scorched No Cal stoner tunes boasts some snappy playing. This album is a little richer and tighter than their debut while retaining the roots and charm.. --- Leeds 8/11 Review from Alive Kicking As you listen to the songs you can easily imagine the musicians lazily standing on the the porch of a ramshackle shack in the middle of a dry wheat field on a sweltering Sacramento summer day straining to play against the oppressive heat. While Sacramento/Davis' Carquinez Straits cannot be strictly classified as a country band, they do an outstanding job of incorporating country elements into their pop songs, which technically make them an alt-country. Where the Freeways... works as 10 shining examples of their ability to effortlessly mix these two genres and the third song, "Faint", stands out as a prime cut on an album that contains no filler. "Faint" starts off just like its title, as just a hint of a song marked by ghostly vocals. Slowly more elements are added and then just after the two-minute mark the song crashes down like a big sad wave. The album isn't all slow, sad songs. The band loosens up with snappy numbers like "Amazing Mystery Man", "Not Even Storms", and "The Beautiful Rot". But even the up tempo numbers have a certain laziness about them, as if the oppressive valley summer heat arrived early, crept into the studio and stole a little life from the band. Finally, an album that captures the feeling of a hot, hazy, lazy Sacramento summer afternoon.

-Brad De Luchi

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