

Mp3 Vervein - Vast Low Cities



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'Girl Swirl' - The aural equivalent of vicodin and red wine at the same time. A moody, atmospheric foursome with ethereal vocals, interwoven guitars and cello set to driving drums. 14 MP3 Songs POP: Power Pop, ROCK: Emo Details: Check out: myspace.com/vervein Become a Vervein friend. VERVEIN LIVE 10-07-05 SF - Hemlock Tavern with the Decoration 10-25-05 Seattle - Chop Suey with American Analog Set 10-27-05 Portland - Doug Fir with American Analog Set 10-28-05 Eugene - WOW Hall with American Analog Set 10-29-05 SF - Bottom of the Hill with American Analog Set 10-30-05 SF - Bottom of the Hill with American Analog Set 11-01-05 LA - Knitting Factory with American Analog Set 6/29/05 SHOW REVIEW Vervein was amazing, I really loved them. They just seemed so truly in their idiom, relaxed yet in control, pitch-perfect and with such fully realized songs. AWESOME! We heard it was their new drummer's first night and we thought she was great. Plus they LOOK great, love their styles and freedom - feminine accent without cheapness or cliché. I will totally be buying their CD as soon as possible. -Martha SF BAY GUARDIAN Joining the list of bands proving that girls can rock as hard (if not harder) than boys are Vervein, an indie rock quartet whose sound is simultaneously dreamy and hard-edged (think Azure Ray meets the Breeders). On their 2003 debut, Vast Low Cities (Angrymooose), the San Francisco band communicate a dark, confident sexiness. The resonating guitars and unabashed, smoky vocals are delicate yet brazen, like a beautiful, exotic flower that also happens to be carnivorous. Set to release a follow-up album this fall, Vervein are poised to give new meaning to (dare we say it?) girl power..." -- Elisa Jacobs WWW.FAKEJAZZ.COM Full Review fakejazz.com/reviews/2004/vervein.shtml From the time they open their lips on the one-minute opener to their self-released debut, "One Whole Year," it's apparent that this San Francisco quartet is intent on treating us to gorgeously layered, hushed vocals à la This Mortal Coil's Rutkowski sisters or His Name is Alive's Livonia, bouncy melodies as

unforgettable as The Go-Go's, and a mesmerizing pop sensibility we haven't heard since femme Brit poppers like Lush, The Primitives, and The Heart Throbs... The best "vocal" album of the year, Vast Low Cities is also stacked to the rafters with lushly romantic pop songs that'll have this listener's ears glued to the speakers, hotly anticipating their follow-up. -- Jeff Penczak THE BEE'S KNEES ZINE

Vervein sit atop this wall, one side there is the Breeders, on the other side there is Mazzy Star, they don't cross over to one side more than the other, but they take the best from both. The clean vocals of Mazzy Star, the tight rhythm of the Breeders, and a mood not heard since the first American Analog Set full length. Some A&R reps from major labels must be missing this band somehow. -- Mike Turner KSCU 103.3FM

Occasionally an album has a mesmerizing quality that just pulls you in, safe and slowly at first, until all of sudden you rub your blurry eyes and realize you've been listening to the disc on repeat for a week. For me, this was just such a one. Combining guitar, bass, and drums with cello and organ, the four ladies of Vervein make beautiful, sometimes soft, sometimes swirling music that crawls inside and stays. At times crisp and clear, and at others dreamy and distant, the vocals meld well to indie rock brimming over with dark and unsettlingly pretty melodies, together producing an eerily attractive sound of melancholic, barely masked desperation. Distortion-fueled crashes stem from somber cello and chiming guitar, hopeful phrases emerge from haunting musical dirges. It's difficult at times to tell which direction Vervein is headed within the pit of despair, but just when the gravity seems too much, pop and hope rear up and leave reason to believe they'll make it up and out. Though not before we get a good glimpse inside. If it's possible to be powerfully beautiful and elegantly mournful all at once, Vervein just may have figured it out. -- Remy Spelunk WWW.LOSTATSEA.NET

More often than not I catch myself daydreaming about movies. Not of movies that have already been made, but movies I'm writing in my head. I fancy myself a moviemaker, though I have very limited knowledge of the working of a camera. For now, these movies will only be screened in my mind to an audience of one. Ahhh, the luxuries of having a crappy temporary day job with very few responsibilities... An album like Vast Low Cities is the perfect soundtrack to one of these mind-films of mine. The movie which takes place in a southwestern town in autumn. The feeling of this indie pop album is very comfortable, easily comparable to Death Cab for Cutie mixed with Kristin Verschell. The songs on this album evoke a range of emotions, and are pretty emotional themselves. Songs like "Cautious" and "Fields Of Green" give an intimate look into the world of this band. Somber and beautiful, these songs bring out a Sunday afternoon feeling. They remind you to take the time to live, no need to

rush day in and day out. Elsewhere on *Vast Low Cities*, "My Disposition" have a much more cheerful pop sound which can help to illustrate a victory of any magnitude in the score to the movie in my mind.

Another one of my favorite songs on the album is "Arches of Georgia". Upbeat and a bit haunting, this song comes right at the midway point of the album and gives off the feeling of accomplishment. I think this song will play as the credits scroll by. It's pretty amazing that this one album can work as the score to a movie in my mind. Vervein is the sort of band that provides creative inspiration to those looking for some of their own... now, if they could only teach me how to work a camera! -- Bob Ladewig

WWW.SPLENDIDEZINE.COM Vervein is sort of a female supergroup; its four members have done time in some great (though mostly overlooked) indie bands, such as Ee and Shackleton. They play a warm, fuzzy, atmospheric style of rock, using a dual guitar, bass and drums line-up, occasionally augmented with cello and organ. Two of the band members sing. Vervein aren't afraid to experiment with song structures, and avoid conventional verse/chorus-based songs. They often make use of atmospheric midsections to add greater dynamic color to their music. Comparisons to Kim Deal and the Breeders would not be out of line, but the Sonora Pine and Rachel's are probably more akin to this style of moody, haunting "rock". Even more so than those bands, Vervein have done an inspired job of sequencing the disc. There are no lulls, no points where one song blurs into the next - in fact, there really isn't a weak track in the bunch. -- Garrett Splain WWW.ACTIONMANMAGAZINE.COM You could get lost trying to follow Vervein through the streets and songs of their *Vast Low Cities*. Corner after corner, the four of them always seem to be a block or two ahead. Just as the dual-female vocals and final drones of the album opener "one whole year" completely lull you into slow-core bliss, you find yourself in a steady nodding to the clean beats and chords of "my disposition." In less than two minutes they already have you wrapped in their "Girl Swirl" sound, as they roll comfortably between the calm and drones of Low and the popping riffs of the Breeders. It's Vervein's ability to manipulate several moods in one song, with songwriter Jess Congdon's dream imbued lyrics, the occasional haunting cello overlay, and the overall intricacy of their arrangements, that really pulls you in to the album and their sound. Vervein haven't received enough exposure outside of San Francisco yet to make it in to many of the all-girl band lists or to get mentioned in any of the recent articles on women in rock. But it's just a matter of time. With a sound this solid, and an album this good, they can't stay hidden for long. -- Christopher

WWW.SOUTHOFMAINSTREAM.COM Who says girls don't write and play great rock and pop music?

Certainly not me, and certainly not after listening to Vervein's "Vast Low Cities". Imagine mixing the alterna-rock intensity of Liz Phair or Louise from Veruca Salt with the folksy guitar stylings of Kristin Hersh. Then throw in some Archers of Loaf style ambience. Finally, stir in some great vocals that nestle delicately or rise sonically to match the guitar licks. You have before you the recipe for a great musical experience. Jessica Congdon's voice is a marvel. She's heard the best of other great female vocalists and manages to make her own voice take on the same of their same distinct traits. Listen to "Honestly" and you hear the lo-fi register of Liz Phair. Listen carefully and you might hear some of the sweetness of the Innocence Mission. "Disposition" brings to mind Kim Deal's vocals, but somehow softer, less in your face. This is a CD you should definitely add to your collection if you like any of the following artists: Liz Phair, The Breeders, Belly, Throwing Muses, Kristin Hersh, Cat Power...the list is too long. If you like intelligent music created by bands made up largely or solely of women, this is a disc you should purchase. -- CompGeekGirl "'Vast Low Cities' is one of the best albums we've heard in a while..." -- Lee Gillespie of American Analog Set. WWW.BLUEMAG.COM Within the first 30 seconds their debut album Vast Low Cities, Vervein sets a lush, warm tone which they skillfully maintain and build upon for the remaining 40 or so minutes. Guitar-rich with warm female vocals pleasantly up front in the mix, Vast Low Cities evokes Kim Deal's best "quiet" work in and out of the Breeders. As the album glides on, the fine indie pop of the American Analog Set, Mazzy Star, and San Francisco's own For Stars comes to mind. "Unarmed" is a drumless, semi-waltz driven by soft, overdubbed vocals and cello. On "Mockingbird" and "My Disposition", Vervein chugs through the tried and true soft/loud dynamic legally required of all indie rock bands since the dawn of the Pixie's "Doolittle" without indulging in the usual harshness of aggressively mixed distortion pedals. "Arches of Georgia" largely sidesteps clean guitar arpeggios in favor of the harder aspects of the band's sound only sparingly revealed on the album. My favorite track on the record, "Stray Dogs", sees the band facing skyward in a short semi-anthem complete with a catchy guitar riff and head nod-ability. Vervein's music is pretty and quiet yet dynamic enough to continuously engage the listener, making Vast Low Cities a solid dreamy day record and an excellent introduction to a band whose acclaim is surely on the way. -- Rooney WWW.ADEQUACY.NET Full Review adequacy.net/reviews/v/vervein.shtml Vast Low Cities is probably going to be the best indie-pop record of 2003. -- Garrett SF WEEKLY Listening to the first few tracks off of Vast Low Cities, the debut release from San Francisco quartet Vervein, it might be easy to characterize the record as a collection of dainty

downtempo pop songs, enhanced by layers of ethereal female vocals that lull a listener into a pleasant, meditative state. But to focus on nothing more than this halcyon element would be a mistake. While Vervein's music -- driven by the interplay between the guitars of Jessica Congdon and Esther Reyes and backed by Rachel Fuller's melodic bass lines and Allison Duke's solid drumming -- is lush and wistful, recalling slowcore bands like Rex and Red House Painters, the band adds complex, emotional lyrics to its dreamy landscapes of sound, making for an intelligent record that dives deep below its deceptively serene surface. Congdon's lyrics are supported by music that makes ample use of the crescendo, as many of the songs build from a sparse beginning to an electrically charged finale. The occasional infusion of Reyes' haunting cello adds an elegant drama to the mix. And just when it seems Vervein overuses minor keys, a bright song like "Disposition" or the infectiously hooky "Stray Dogs" interrupts the moody reverie. Overall, the material on Vast Low Cities inspires a response similar to what its lyrics evoke: It's easy to dream of beautiful things while we listen, but those hopes are dashed when the record, like all things, comes to an end.-- Liz Montalbano

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