

## Mp3 The Fire Apes - Central Park Carousel



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The Fire Apes understand what the British pop invasion was about and yet transcend the past and merge it beautifully with the future. 12 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, POP: Power Pop Details: The latest Brit-pop invasion comes from Charleston, South Carolina in the guise of The Fire Apes and their fine sophomore release Central Park Carousel . While these dozen songs ring true with that affable sound of pleasant 1960s jangle pop, there's often more behind that songs than what's obvious. The Fire Apes is mostly the efforts of John Seymour, who is surrounded by a band only on two tracks here. Other than that (and the constant presence of Paolo Licciardi on drums), Seymour has written all the songs, does all the vocals, plays all the guitars and bass and even contributes percussion. He's the creative powerhouse behind this new collection - and his talents translate to some very enjoyable pop that harkens back to an earlier era. John Seymour is an avid reader and thinker, so inspirations from the literary world or political events often find their subtle way into the lyrics of what may seem on the surface to be merely love songs. Even the name of the band is derived from an essay by Loren Eiseley about how a certain species discovers something (like fire) and then eventually it gets incorporated into the lives of the whole species. Eiseley was inspired by nothing more than squirrels gaining access into birdfeeders - so go figure. The current CD's title of course is a nod to J.D. Salinger's "Catcher In The Rye," wherein the Central Park Carousel plays a pivotal role in the plot (where Holden watches Phoebe on the carousel, perhaps his greatest moment of happiness in the book). The songs here generally reflect that happiness. The CD opens with "Lori," a genial guitar-driven pop song that confesses a love for someone relatively unknown ("I don't know her / I think I love her") that is in part inspired by Salinger's short stories ("pretty mouth and green my eyes") as well as F. Scott Fitzgerald's "A Life In Letters." However, it's unlikely that any listener would likely pick up on this (until now). "Let Me Know" opens up with a jangly guitar riff that sounds a lot

like the oft-covered Reg Presley classic "Love Is All Around," yet Seymour takes it in another direction here. It's a pretty harmony-filled song about the difficulty of communication within relationships. A more upbeat number, "Summer," reflects not only the season, but the state of mind that comes with it. It's happy and infectious and loaded up with guitars. Seymour shows a more pensive, reflective side on the double-tracked vocals of "I'm Always Thinking (How Good It Would Be)." The narrator here seems fairly assured of eventual pleasant endings, and smiles pondering that in the mean time. Again, this is fine music in the style of Britpop's heydays of yore. One of my favorites here is the ska-tinged "Five Inside," which could be an English Beat number from the new wave days, though there are vocal tics and a happy feel that also recalls The Housemartins. Mike Pennington does a fine job on bass here, and Jeff Bateman helps out on guitars. This is great fun, and you can dance to it. The Fire Apes go a bit Flo and Eddie-like (or The Association) with the harmonies at the opening of "Isabel (The Razor's Edge)." You've read W.Somerset Maugham's book, you've seen both versions of the movie, now hear the song. It's basically a dulcet love song, as the dreamer Larry pursues Isabel (who spurns him ultimately for someone more practical, alas). The one cover song in this collection features The Fire Apes doing their version of the Goffin-King Herman's Hermits hit "I'm Into Something Good." They give this strong song a harder guitar edge that works well. Seymour explains that his lyrics often are written metaphorically with layers of meaning. He knows that listeners can either hear the lyrics as they are, or delve more deeply. Either way, Seymour seeks to capture a feeling - and if there's a message/theme/motif inspired by a book or experience, then he hopes that leads to a meaningful inspiration for listeners. "You've Got That Love" is an intriguing example of this. On the surface, it's another pretty and melodic love song, yet Seymour's lyrics also are influenced by (of all things) Bobby Kennedy's role in the Cuban Missile Crisis during discussions about attacking the Russian navy and/or Russia ("confusion and recrimination / re-ignited through temptation"). I don't think anyone's likely to pick up on this - instead, most will just enjoy the song for its aural pleasures - but it's fascinating to know the factors that go into a lyric. Another of my favorites here is "All The Right Things." A strong melody and superb harmonies elevate the song, which is about feeling dissatisfaction in spite of things being done the right way (inspired by Rimbaud's poetry and search to understand the deeper meanings of things). Seymour knows how to write beautiful melodies and well-constructed pop songs. Witness "For A Day," another gorgeous love song (that love thing never seems to go smoothly, does it). "Tell Me (What Do You Think About Loving Me?)" is an upbeat pondering

of that musical question, sent to that confusing stranger who probably doesn't even know his name: "my dream won't fade away / it's all just imagery." The CD closes with the poignant ballad "I Love You," seemingly another sweet love song, but actually inspired by Orwell's "1984" and the note the protagonist receives from a "part member." But not to worry - it works plenty well as a love song without any literary cliff notes. There's no doubting the talents of John Seymour and The Fire Apes. This is pleasant music, easy on the ears, chock full of harmony and sweet guitars with a very subtle intelligent literary bent to the lyrics. As such, \*Central Park Carousel\* is a most enjoyable musical ride, and will have fans of that catchy Britpop-style music coming back for more. -- Gary Glauber A truly spectacular, classic slab of pure, clean 'n sweet power pop. Sounds like the Spongetones(think "Beat Music"), The Romantics, Paul Collins' Beat, Beat-Beatles like The Knickerbockers and sunny day beach vibe making it all sound very American. The hooks are unrelenting inside the hear-swelling, urgent melodies and trumped up jangle. --notlame Central Park Carousel - by the Fire Apes. This power pop band's sophomore effort is on the Kool Kat Musik label - which is a big clue regarding its appeal to pop fans! I can't put my finger on who they sound like ... but Beatles-inspired power pop tunes with chiming guitars - like "All The Right Things," "Tell Me" and "Let Me Know" - will please a very broad audience. --Eric Sorensen- fufkin.com Central Park Carousel The Fire Apes WOW! Another new Kool Kat release! The Apes return with a killer sophomore effort and we're thrilled to be involved! Fulfilling the promise of their excellent debut - "Perfect Day For Bananafish", John Seymour and mates deliver 12 slices of classic, guitar-driven hook-n-harmony-filled Power Pop destined to be a 2005 Top Tenner for sure! Includes a great cover of "I'm Into Something Good" (Herman's Hermits)! Can't say enough about this one!! GREAT!!!!

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