

## Mp3 The Kite-eating Tree - Method: Fail, Repeat...



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"Call it post-post-punk: the best parts of '90s acts like Jawbox and Quicksand updated with a modern melodic edge... If you're looking for unique post-punk that's as challenging as it is rocking, look no further. 4 out of 5." - AP Magazine - May 2004

10 MP3 Songs

ROCK: Punk, ROCK: Emo

Details: "The Kite-Eating Tree's cleverness doesn't end with the band's unique name. It also spans throughout this California outfit's 10-track post-hardcore offering, a collection that shimmers with beauty the way broken glass looks through sunlight. Sometimes jagged, sometimes rugged, but always engaging, tracks like the punchy "Through the Width of a Straw" mix the hard rock of Foo Fighters with the emotional wringing of Far, while the noisy melodics of "All Swedish, No Finish" and "Retrograde" have enough firepower to stir up a pit, yet enough heartfelt sentiment to evoke a group singalong. Blurring the edges between today's arena rock and small club indie rock, The Kite-Eating Tree expertly tugs at your senses with the wide range of styles and superb songwriting skills. If you think the current wave of rock bands today is getting stale, let this quartet's debut release try and change your perception." Mike SOS - In Music We Trust - May 2004

BIOGRAPHY: "Here's how my weird childhood shaped my ethos," waxes The Kite-Eating Tree's singer-guitarist Mike Hunter, "when I was kid, my uncle gave me a piece of advice. On day one of any new school, he said to go up to the biggest kid in class and punch him in the face." Hunter chuckles and then continues in the reflective tone usually reserved for the telling of first kisses, "He added that while I might get my ass kicked once in a while, no kid at that school would ever mess with me again. Well, I did get my ass kicked a few times, because I moved at least ten times when I was a kid. But people never fucked with me after those fights. Growing up with those kinds of experiences, and other facts--like the fifteen or so dogs of mine that died during childhood--worrying about whether or not industry people are going to help my band seems ridiculous." It's this self-determination that earns

respect for The Kite-Eating Tree. Formed in October of 2002 in the Silverlake area of Los Angeles, the quartet has purposely sidestepped the LA musical scene that has become saturated with Musician Institute-trained, Urban Outfitters-dressed sycophants looking to genuflect before the major-label brass ring. Embracing the DIY ethos of their post-punk influences, they've played primarily all ages shows (and rarely in Los Angeles), toured the West Coast with only one dollar CDRs to distribute, and on March 23, 2004, Suburban Home Records will manufacture and distribute their self-financed debut CD, entitled *Method: Fail, Repeat*. "We actually received a couple of contracts," explains Hunter, "but even indie labels are acting like majors these days: asking for several records, offering low royalty rates, and not even guaranteeing that they will actually promote it. I always thought the point of the musical 'underground' was to break from the industry's 'exploit the band' mindset. By god, maybe even do something a little different: like be fair." Walking hand in hand with Hunter's refreshing DIY philosophy is his songwriting, an idiosyncratic blend of distorted guitars and vocal harmonies. *Method: Fail, Repeat* (due out March 23, 2004 on Cowboy Versus Sailor/Suburban Home Records) is filled with snarling guitars, staccato rhythms, and intelligent lyrics, the KET straddles the line between indie rock and emo-core that sometimes gets labeled as "post-hardcore." But what truly separates *Method: Fail, Repeat* from so many other heavy, independent releases is the KET's true dedication to pop songwriting structure and poetic lyricism: strong narrative verses set up the hook-laden choruses, while the tension building segues give the listener a sense of travel. "I have always felt that loud, aggressive music can and should be intelligent," adds Hunter. To read the lyrics is to travel through Hunter's psyche: from the political agenda of "Pennies for the Porcine," to the social commentary of "Hollywood Hates You," to the personal tale of "Save Your Stares" (which chronicles Hunter's experiences while pushing his wife's wheelchair), *Method: Fail/Repeat* bears more lyrical semblance to Neil Young or Springsteen even if the musical influences are more easily associated with bands like Thrice or Thursday. "I'm very proud of the fact that there are no songs on the CD which involve breaking up relationships, bad childhoods, or being misunderstood by my classmates," Hunter rants, "it is so adolescent to assume that the world revolves around whether or not some girl or boy likes you." *Method: Fail, Repeat* is a collection of songs that span back to when Hunter and bassist Trent Steinbrugge were in a band called Hyphen. After knocking around the Silverlake scene for several years, the second guitar player left and the band put a call out to Tom Ackerman, then drummer of Sunday's Best (Polyvinyl) and former singer/guitarist for Skiploader (Geffen).

Ackerman, who had engineered some Hyphen demos a year or so earlier, put down the drum sticks, the band name was changed, and the KET has charged on ever since. In October of 2003, drummer Mark Powell [who has played with Liars Inc (Sony) The Get Set (crank)] was added to complete the current lineup. "Tom was the spark that really jumpstarted us," quips Hunter, "every band needs to have those guys desperate for attention to fuel it..." When prompted about the band's potential future and achievable goals, Hunter mentions extensive touring in 2004 and continues to downplay the attention with humor, "we're satisfied with playing shows on the road and releasing our CD on our own terms. If the question is, would we host TRL, lend our music to a shampoo commercial, or pose in pairs of Diesel jeans? Maybe..." "And if my aunt had balls, she'd be my uncle."

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