

Mp3 Headless Household - Post-polka



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"Post-Polka" is an album chock full of experimental polka, alt polka, and jazz meets polka meets other genres that seemed good at the time we were cooking this unusual and fun musical stew. 14 MP3 Songs

JAZZ: Weird Jazz, FOLK: Power-folk Details: "One of the last unexplored realms of Americana is the rich and colorful tapestry of European-American polka music. Charlie Mingus was to have said, White man, study your polkas.' Here Headless Household playfully has opened the songbook...This project is buoyant, contemporary and original. Influences from the German, Polish, Scandinavian, Tejano, Klezmer and American Country/Western polkas are obvious. Yet all of these elements kaleidoscopically dance and blend in a joyous celebration of life and music..." --Greg Drust, Milwaukee-based Polka DJ/ scholar, in his liner notes for "post-Polka" For its sixth feature-length album, Headless Household gets deep into the business of polka, as theme, variation, and landing strip. This Santa Barbara, California-based band has been around and kicking, and occasionally lapsing into a void, since 1983. It started out with only a vague notion of direction, and has so remained. Along the way--so far--the band has brushed across elements of jazz, free improv, surf music, lyrical ECM-ishness, noisephonics, soupy balladry, faux Euro sounds, C&W, and, of course, polka. That tendency revealed itself on the 1987 debut album, with the tune "Isle of Hugh." Headless Household's idea of polka revolves around the conviction that polka is a great music, and a style easily molded into new, experimental forms, with humor sauce on the side. Sincerity and slipperiness add up to a new polka house blend. Noted photographer Richard Ross, who has kindly supplied the two previous Headless Household CD cover images (Free Association and mockhausen) lends his weirdly perfect, dream-colored cover image to the project. The musical map of post-Polka includes more-or-less straight polka tunes ("Days of the Week," "A World Without Polka," "Spencer the Polka Dispenser"), but also touches of cumbia ("Puck's Polka"), a moody art-pop-polka

number ("Moderate Moderation), an actual waltz ("Of Waltzes"), and instrumental side trips ("Wyatt's Burp," "Picture of Health," the digital deconstruction piece "Divertimental" and the surprisingly tender closer, "Bolka"). Also included are two tunes ("We're On Another Level," "Turnip of the Year") from the musical Turnip Family Secrets, by Joe Woodard and Michael Smith. The album's two-year recording process unfolded first at the popular and now defunct Riviera Studios, with Wayne Sabbak at the helm. Later, operations moved up to the studio-with-a-view known as The Tompond. The core band (Dick Dunlap, keys, Tom Lackner, percussives, Chris Symer, bass, Joe Woodard, guitar/songsmithing) got plenty of help from gifted guests. Lead vocalist Julie Christensen's diverse resume includes work with her band Divine Horsemen, vocalizing with Leonard Cohen, and her own solo recordings. Here, she latches onto the polka spirit heartily. Glen Philips, formerly of Toad the Wet Sprocket and now of Glen Philips, sings in a moody-cool voice on "Moderate Moderation" and "Of Waltzes," and Spencer Barnitz sings bouncily on the sort-of custom-made "Spencer the Polka Dispenser." Ellen Turner, Allegra Heidelinde and Shelly Rudolph are designated as vocal "polkettes." Blues harmonica wizard Tom Ball inserts choice licks and Bill Flores atmospheric caulking on pedal steel, along with fine playing by trumpeters Jeff Elliott, Nate Birkey and Jeff Kaiser, violinist Sally Barr, and all-purpose reed player Tom Buckner, working wonders on sax and bass clarinet. Guest bassists Jim Connolly, David Piltch, and Kenny Edwards also pitched in. In short, it was a time-released polka party posse. Thanks for listening. Hope ya' like it. "Hailing from Santa Barbara, California, Headless Household achieved regional cult status by the late 1990s, thanks to their quirky and eclectic kind of new music, their relentless live shows and a string of albums all released on the bands own label Household Ink." --All-Music Guide (allmusic.com)

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