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### Makar: Funeral Genius

Makar does what so many other bands try to do, but fail. They combine indie, pop and rock with catchy lyrics, and they do it very, very well. They make well written songs with a distinctive sound, mixing irreverence with seriousness, layering complex arrangements under likeable melodies. In a lot of ways they're similar to Radiophonic - recently reviewed by RUST - in that there's a real excellence and uniqueness in every small element of what they do, and their album "Funeral Genius" immediately breaks through to best-of, must-have status.

Coming from the left of center, with distinctive presences from both Andrea DeAngelis and Mark Purnell "Funeral Genius" takes elements of the 60's and everything since and weaves together a complete full-length album that is strong from start to finish. For "Funeral Genius" this husband and wife pair are supported by bassist Mark Nilges and the mighty, legendary NYC drummer Dawn McGrath, and the result is an album that makes you stop whatever else you're doing and LISTEN to it. It grabs, holds and rewards your attention and you realize that this is one of those all-time-legendary releases that will define this musical moment in your memory.

With ten years of time together, during which Makar impressed audiences at top venues around the New York area, this album definitely sounds like a unified presentation from an experienced team. The press has been kind to them, and a feature on MTV got them a deal with Sizzleteen Records. "Funeral Genius" is the result of that deal, and it has actually been the result of a lot of long-term work. Recorded at the Seaside Lounge Recording Studios in Park Slope, Brooklyn, "Funeral Genius" was three years in the making. As Mark recalls, "We recorded the first 11 songs on the album in one day at Seaside out in Brooklyn getting the drums and bass down and then "Devil in a Dream" was recorded in one day out at Andrea's parent's house in Mendham, NJ on a handheld tape recorder.

Mark Purnell has been compared to a young John Cale, and the band shares vibes ranging from Bjork to Bowie to Blondie with strong 60's roots. There is strong retro-esque songwriting similar in both feel and excellence to the Brian Jonestown Massacre, but this is not a "retro" band. It's a folky, punky, indie mix that presents a team of unique and talented people, and that's the real take-away here. Makar accomplishes a sound and feel that many, many other bands try to achieve and usually fail because they're not talented songwriters and performers whose music comes from experience and authentic talent.

Spoiler alert: this is an album that will have you throwing away half a dozen other "wannabe" albums from your collection.

So get ready to make some space on your shelf or playlist for "Funeral Genius" and pick it up right away. It's going to be one of your most-loved albums of all time. Essential.

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