

HARP

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2005

CocoRosie

Noah's Ark (TOUCH & GO)



Creaking and groaning like the hardwood of an old apartment, last year's *La Maison De Mon Reve* bridged a gap between the pre-war blues of Bessie Smith, the celestial allure of the Cocteau Twins and the Bohemian bliss of art school. For their follow-up, *Noah's Ark*, CocoRosie ditched the two-girls-with-a-four-track-in-the-kitchen mystique of their debut, and instead recorded wherever they happened to be at the time, aided by fellow folk-theater compatriots Antony (of "and the Johnsons" fame) and Devendra Banhart, among others. The songs on *Noah's Ark* are by turns darker and more ambient, scattered with found sounds and foreign voices. Providing his copper falsetto, Antony turns "Beautiful Boyz" into a grim piece of operatic drama and French MC Spleen could almost be considered a third member of the group for the infectious house beats he lays over "Bisounours," "K-Hole" and the title track. Anyone who fell in love with CocoRosie because they were good to drink cabernet to while you wished you were in Paris may be a bit dismayed. *Noah's Ark* is a challenging work, one that deserves more attention than being background music for writing sad poetry in your journal. **BRIAN J. BARR**