

Band of the Day

CocoRosie



By: Jessica Grose

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You know how all your friends came back from studying abroad in France listening to French rap, and at first you thought it was total crap, but after hearing it pumping through your paper-thin institutional white walls for about a month you thought it was sort of OK, and then really pretty awesome, and you stopped caring about the fact that you couldn't understand what they were saying and tried to ignore that fact that people in tight pants can't be thugs. That's what listening CocoRosie is like: The Casady sisters create a cross-cultural experiment (Parisian and American) in genre dipping (blues and experimental hip-hop) that, at first, sounds completely batty and sort of irritating, but, after a while, it creeps into your heart and becomes by turns haunting and entertaining.

CocoRosie's first album, *La Maison de Mon Reve (The House of My Dream)* was written and recorded in a brief period of time by siblings Sierra and Bianca Casady, American ex-pats reunited in Paris. Sierra is a classically trained opera singer, and though her voice is mellifluous and floaty, she certainly doesn't sound like she'll be singing *The Magic Flute* any time soon: Her voice is at times child-like and generally unfettered along the lines of Nelly Furtado, Joanna Newsom, and Fiona Apple. CocoRosie sometimes sounds like their tracks were dug up from phonograph records laid down in the '20s, with elements of old American spirituals recorded at the lowest fidelity possible.

Their new album, *Noah's Ark*, continues with some of the same themes and sounds established on *La Maison*. They talk a lot about Jesus, and it's unclear if they're being ironic. The Casady sisters continue to layer traditionally religious sounding blues vocals over simple sampled drumbeats and animal noises. Animal noises have been a hallmark of CocoRosie's sound from the beginning. In "Butterscotch," off their first album, the girls sing lines like "You remind me of baseball!" over the repeated sample of a rooster crowing, while in "Bear Hides and Buffalo," off *Noah's Ark*, the ambient noises include kittens meowing, women keening, and horsies neighing. Judging from the cover of *Noah's Ark*, perhaps those

are unicorns, not ponies: The artwork depicts a trio of unicorns in flagrante -- and one of them has a rainbow coming out of his eyes.

This image is a perfect visual metaphor for the sound CocoRosie makes. Sierra and Bianca sound like humping unicorns spewing rainbows in a muddled watercolor field: fantastical and childlike and strangely pretty all at once. For the full bizarre effect, CocoRosie will be touring with Antony and the Johnsons (a former Band of the Day and vocal contributor to *Noah's Ark*) starting on September 16.

CocoRosie tour dates:

9/16, New York, NY (SOB's)
9/17, Seattle, WA (Triple Door)*
9/20, San Francisco, CA (Palace of Fine Arts)*
9/22, Los Angeles, CA (Vista Theater)*
9/23, San Diego, CA (San Diego Woman's Club)*
9/28, Boston, MA (Paradise)*
9/29, Montreal, Canada (Cabaret La Tulip)*
10/1, Toronto, Canada (St. Trinity Paul Church)*
10/3, Detroit, MI (Gem Theater)*
10/4, Chicago, IL (Park West)*
10/6, Minneapolis, MN (Women's Club)*
10/7, Milwaukee, WI (Pabst Theater)*
10/14, Philadelphia, PA (First Unitarian Church)
(* with Antony and the Johnsons)