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BACKWOODS



CocoRosie

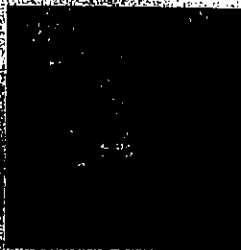
The Adventures of Ghosthorse and Stillborn
(Touch and Go)

Bunny Rabbit

Lovers and Crypts
(Voodoo-EROS)

The Adventures of Ghosthorse and Stillborn doesn't see CocoRosie reinventing its own personal wheel so much as smoothing out the rougher edges. Prior releases saw the Casady sisters gladly sacrificing coherency to push their eerie, extraterrestrial aesthetic to its upper limits. This time out, none of their trademark eccentricities seem out of place; everything is streamlined, nothing forced. Gone, for the most part, is the folk influence that defined much of CocoRosie's two prior releases. Instead, *The Adventures of Ghosthorse and Stillborn* owes a greater debt to hip-hop with an increased emphasis on programmed beats and Bianca's spoken-word vocals, which have evolved into a sort of proto-rapping. Of course, there are still enough ghostly passages interspersed in the mix to allow Sierra's soaring banshee wail room to operate. The record is a large step forward in maturity for the duo and shows that they aren't willing to settle on novelty as a selling point.

Speaking of business, it's equally promising for Bianca Casady's other endeavor at the moment. Voodoo-EROS Records, the label she started with business partner Melissa Shimkovitz, has enjoyed a slow but steady first year of operation. The label's latest release is *Lovers and Crypts*, the debut effort of racy Brooklyn MC Bunny Rabbit. Together with her producer/lesbian life partner Black Cracker, Rabbit drops sexually charged rhymes over spooky, haunted-house beats. Basically, it's exactly the kind of screwball endeavor you'd expect a member of CocoRosie to get behind. Rabbit's crass, promiscuous shtick can wear thin at times (see "Dirty Dirt" and its ridiculous transition from outdoor sex confessional to curse-filled rant against urban development). Still, when Bunny Rabbit finds a happy medium between sex appeal and oddball antics ("Saddle Up," "Lucky Bunny Foot"), the results are surprisingly infectious. **CocoRosie: B+; Bunny Rabbit: B-** Justin Sheppard



Explosions in the Sky, Ted L
Deerhoof, Menom
Nick Casady and

