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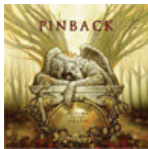
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[Indie Rock] Pinback

September 13, 2007

by **Annie Zaleski**



Pinback is a difficult band to categorize. The San Diego duo's instrumental textures often feel as emotionally weighty as a movie score, like Explosions in the Sky minus the grandiose noise-hurricanes, or Death Cab for Cutie's early albums. But its intricate arrangements and occasional pop curveball (the O.C. compilation fave "Fortress") skew it closer to electro-math-rockers Minus the Bear, and even the Police, if Sting had, say, attended college in the Midwest and was a huge math-rock geek.

The latter two bands especially spring to mind when listening to the fantastic *Autumn of the Seraphs*. Much more vibrant than 2004's *Summer in Abaddon*, *Seraphs* relies less on atmospheric and more on lively guitar textures and cascading harmonies. Opening track "From Nothing to Nowhere" careens like a race car just on the edge of crashing, thanks to a whirlygig tempo and electrified riffs; "Blue Harvest," too, marches forward defiantly, like power-pop coated in grit rather than gloss. But all of *Seraphs'* small pleasures need multiple spins to fully appreciate, mostly because Pinback members Zach Smith and Rob Crow create such dense music. Only close listens reveal the album's subtle genius: the thick bassline digging through "Barnes" or the criss-crossing delicate croons driving "Good to Sea."

PINBACK

Autumn of the Seraphs

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