

The New Year: Former Indie-Minimalists Expand Horizons

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Over fifteen years ago, quiet indie band Bedhead began making gorgeously hushed music, with restrained instrumentation and hushed vocals that made them a staple in indie music circles. Sadly, though, the band called it quits in 1998, leaving its two band leaders - brothers Matt and Bubba Kadane - bored and longing for something to do with their time. They eventually formed a new creative outlet, **The New Year**, and released their first full-length three years after Bedhead's last record.

The New Year moved well beyond Bedhead's musical faculties with 2001's *Newness Ends* and 2004's *The End Is Near*, abandoning much of the indie-minimalism that defined Bedhead. While many aspects of the hazy, haunting, and delicate melodies are still present throughout **The New Year's** music, this project knows how to flex its muscles, giving the songs a harder and often sharper edge. Where Bedhead, at times, seemed to be about vacancy, background and the value of negative space, **The New Year** focuses more on presence and foreground, creating a musical focal point that, for the most part, eluded Bedhead.

"The process doesn't really differ too much on a fundamental level," Bubba Kadane says. "Any differences in the way that we work now compared to ten-plus years ago have more to do with advances in technology such as hard disc recording replacing cassette eight tracks as demo tools and the natural course of musical development than a band name change."

But along with the new offerings in recording technology comes a different approach to **The New Year's** newest album. "One of the obvious differences on first listen between this album and past ones in the prominence of piano," Bubba says, "which does point to a change in the songwriting process on those songs since Matt began all of those on piano. Piano was his first instrument, before guitar, so it is a natural instrument for him to gravitate to as a songwriting tool."

Although they have used similar instrumentation on previous recordings, the upcoming album feels different than past efforts. Bubba attributes this to changing the approach of his own guitar-work: "I do think that this record feels not only less dominated by guitar, but even the guitars themselves are used to create textures that may be more varied than in the past. Everything other than piano and occasional keyboard is done on guitar... I also feel like the presence of piano really positively affected my approach to the guitar parts. The lone guitar that accompanies the piano on 'Body and Soul' could very easily have been different if the main chords were done on guitar instead of piano."

The New Year have no doubt found their niche, and Bubba, for one, has a



positive outlook on the future of his band. "I think that I enjoy every aspect of making and performing music now more than I ever have. That has to do with a lot more than just a change of band members and a band name. It has to do with maturation, personal changes, and musical needs and desires too."

The New Year's upcoming, self-titled album comes out September 9th via Touch and Go.

- Michael Danaher

The New Year: www.thenewyear.net

Touch And Go: www.tgrec.com

"The Company I Can Get" - from the forthcoming album:

