



Rating: 

Long ago, in a time far far away, **Bedhead** graced us with a several albums throughout the nineties; each one revolved around their slow, emotive sound. Years later, decades in fact, the Kadane brothers carry on with their similar stylings, only with a new moniker; **The New Year**.

Their third album under the *new* name, *The New Year*, carries with it similar sounds. In fact, a fair assumption would be to assume that the bands are one in the same, despite the absence of several members. Still, the Kadane brothers have always been the center of this slow-core universe, and they remain so today.

Case in point is the opening track, "Folios." For three plus minutes it slowly builds and builds; gentle guitars pick their way through the track, backed by the slightest of drum beats. By the time the vocals join in the song is near its close, but it leaves you with one of the main thematic statements from this record, as Kadane sings "I don't think the good years I have left can wait/so what are we staying for." It seems to be an album about isolation and moving forward.

The largest change on the album is the skeletal importance of the piano work. Sure, I've seen it before on their previous projects, but here it gives a greater weight to each song in which it uses, and it is used as the sole instrument on "MMV." It is just one of the many ways **The New Year** has managed to branch out their sound on this new album.

Interestingly enough, the band doesn't seem to have too many contemporaries these days, which is perhaps why I find this album so interesting. There aren't any elements of folk dancing about, and you'd be hard up to find a dance number here; not to mention the fact that the excess noise in these songs is used merely as a compliment, not as focal point. They've perfected their format, and without the like of **American Football** and other like-minded bands, **The New Year** is on top of their game.

For me, their specialty has always been their ability to control the ebbs and flows of their music. As quickly as they build up the pace and the tension in their songs, they turn around and return it all back to the pleasant pacing of where they began. Few bands have been able to touch on this balance, always dancing on crescendos, and yet always holding back. I'm sure one day they will let go, and that one day will be everything you want it to be, but for now, I'm okay with their ability to control it.

The gentle approach of this album carries a lot of power for me as the listener, and for you as well, I hope. It's the sort of album you want to play in your bedroom when you are all alone, just absorbing yourself in an album in its entirety. It lacks pretension, yet each listen unfolds more and more. Put your headphones on, and get deep into **The New Year**.

If you are more of the live setting kind of person, rather than headphones, then you should check them out live when they come to Austin on September 20th. They will be hitting the stage at Emos.