

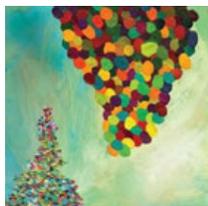


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Crystal Antlers Tentacles Review

Album. Released 07 April 2009.

Discography information comes from MusicBrainz. You can add or edit information about Tentacles at musicbrainz.org.



BBC Review

There's some serious song writing talent under all that sonic debris.

Jon Lusk 2009-03-31

Succinctly described by Uncut as 'fried psychedelic punks', these Long Beach-based noise merchants offer a full-frontal sonic assault on their debut album. Initially, their lo-fi cacophony is bewildering, exhausting and exhilarating in equal measure. But repeated plays reveal method to their madness, as a myriad of melodies emerge.

Buried under Victor Rodriguez' glowering organ, ear-shredding guitar feedback and fevered rhythms (they have both a percussionist and a drummer) is the deranged, hysterical howl of singer/bassist Jonny Bell. Only occasionally are any of his words decipherable, but you get the impression that, like Michael Stipes' mumble on early REM records, this is a critical part of Crystal Antlers' appeal. Probably if their sound were cleaned up and you could hear the lyrics properly, they'd lose much of their mystery.

Tentacles is splattered with diverse and intriguing influences, and the fact that this six-piece have covered songs by both psychedelic garage rockers The Chocolate Watchband and jazz pianist Mose Allison gives some idea of the breadth of these. The free-jazz honking that emerges on both the 25-second Foot Of The Mountain and the epic closer Several Tongues underlines that. On Memorized, descending keyboard riffs and restless tempo changes hint at prog rock guilty pleasures, but the hardcore thrash of the title track has the economy and bite of Dead Kennedys – with a few twists and turns.

Mercifully, the material isn't all high-speed and in-yer-face. The radioactive glow of Vapor Trail offers some almost ambient respite, and Until The Sun Dies (Part One) has a more reflective, bluesy mood and a pop feel... before being engulfed by more craziness.

Crystal Antlers have been compared to fellow Californians Comets On Fire, and fans of their role models Butthole Surfers as well as The Mothers of Invention, and any number of psych(edelia) influenced and/or hard-rocking bands will all smile at various points. Although it's clearly meant to be turned up to eleven for full effect, Tentacles tellingly also works at low volume, which shows there's some serious song writing talent under all that sonic debris.

Tracks

- 1 Painless Sleep
- 2 Dust
- 3 Time Erased
- 4 Andrew
- 5 Vapor Trail
- 6 Tentacles
- 7 Until the Sun Dies, Part 1
- 8 Memorized
- 9 Glacier
- 10 Foot of the Mountain
- 11 Your Spears
- 12 Swollen Sky
- 13 Several Tongues

Release Events

Touch and Go Records

Apr 07 2009 United States

CD TG342

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