



Music

## **Pinback's *Autumn of the Seraphs***

Still depressed and slightly confusing, but no longer incapacitatingly so

by **Michael D. Ayers**

September 11th, 2007 12:44 PM

It's been awhile since we heard from San Diego's Pinback—three years, to be exact. But some important things happened in that time, mainly the "mainstreaming" of "indie" rock, a revelation that should bode rather well for a band like this—as Death Cab for Cutie and the Decemberists have proven, there's a big market out there for smart guys who like to be sensitive, lush, and nasal all at once. Which describes Pinback perfectly, though they've relied heavily on brooding, angular guitars to such an excessive degree that three- fourths of the way through a typical album, most listeners are left incapacitatingly bummed, if not merely confused or bored.

*Autumn of the Seraphs* is different. Almost cheery-sounding. "Good to Sea" is sufficiently poppy, with a catchy little key riff and nice chorus with a sly, slight pun (It's good to sea/see you). Opener "From Nothing to Nowhere" also makes the case that Pinback's ready for some new fans: It's fast and furious, nicely setting a tempo that suggests they're not fucking around while conveying a (much-needed) immediacy through Rob Crow's voice. OK, dig deeper and you find that the lyrics are still dark, confusing, and possibly depressing—but hey, they masked it quite well this time. Good for them.