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First Listen: Pinback – *Autumn of the Seraphs*

Anticipation is high for the first new material from San Diego's Pinback since 2004's *Summer In Abadon* made them critical darlings. That album's single, "Fortress,"



combined delicately strummed guitar and barely-enunciated lyrics with an insistent drum machine to create an unlikely radio hit, such as it was. Their new album moves forward a season but retains the quiet intensity: "Good to Sea" uses the same casio drum machine beat as "Fortress," adding a simple keyboard melody, and the song's melancholy sneaks up on you, until they sing, quietly, "Oh no/I've hit rock bottom."

Pinback were known for slightly denser work on their first two albums, 1999's *Pinback* and 2001's *Blue Screen Life*, but got a little more polished and streamlined on *Abadon*. On *Seraphs*, they seem to slightly relax the insistence on catchiness that made *Abadon* a surprise hit, allowing more complex arrangements to sneak into tracks like "Blue Harvest:" syncopated drumming, surprising chord changes, layered vocals. But don't get me wrong: it's still catchy.

Even when Pinback speed it up, as on album opener "From Nothing to Nowhere," they're still reserved; this restraint is one of Pinback's greatest assets. Maybe it has something to do with multi-instrumentalist Rob Crow getting out his volume-knob jollies in joke-metal side project Goblin C***? Unlike, er, G.C., *Seraphs* wouldn't scare anybody at your nice dinner party, but I think it'll also reward closer attention.

Autumn of the Seraphs is out 9/11 on Touch & Go. Grab an mp3 from the Pinback website:

- Pinback – "From Nothing to Nowhere"

Posted by **Party Ben** on 08/10/07 at 4:23 PM | [E-mail](#) | [Print](#) | [Digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [Reddit](#) | [Yahoo MyWeb](#) | [StumbleUpon](#) | [Newsvine](#) | [Netscape](#) | [Google](#) |

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