

Crosswinds Weekly
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Band: Bedhead Loved Macha
Album: Macha Loved Bedhead
Label: Jetset Records
Release Date: April 2000

Macha Loved Bedhead, by Bedhead Loved Macha, caught my eye because it has one of the most intriguing titles I've ever seen. The story behind it is even cooler.

But first, the music. Here are six rough-voiced lullabies to distant companions, sometimes discordant, often soothing. Bedhead Loved Macha uses the opportunity of this CD to embark on six reflective soundscape journeys that are often experimental but always worthwhile.

The story is this: two pairs of brothers, the Kadanés and the McKays, started a high school band in their hometown of Wichita Falls, Texas. By 1999, though, Matt and Bubba Kadane lived in Dallas and had a band called Bedhead, and Joshua and Mischo McKay lived in Athens and had a band called Macha. But their resolve to record together was undiminished. To this end, the Kadanés put together an eight-track tape of song skeletons, mostly drums and guitars. The McKays fleshed them out and sent them back.

The result is rock music with (oddly but compellingly enough) an ubiquitous dulcimer, rich and somber mood music that captures a sense of distance. The feeling that the listener is eavesdropping on a private musical conversation is based on reality and made more poignant by the fact that, since the completion of this small gem, Bedhead has disbanded.

Before letting this CD get away with a glowing review, though, a word needs to be said about the misuse of technology. When CDs were conceived as a way for the recording industry to raise their profit margins and encourage consumers to replace their entire music collections, a few perks were offered to entice the listener. Chief among these was the ability to switch easily from song to song--taken for granted on a record, but lost during the sad days of the 8-track and cassette. Unfortunately, many recording artists took it upon themselves to abuse this amenity. This abuse was called the "hidden track," and it allowed the artist to be clever by inserting lots of silence, followed by some weird noise, after the last song. The two effects of this were to startle those who had forgotten the CD was still playing, and to make the CD player's random function worthless by inserting the possibility of a hidden track that would throw off the whole mix.

Bedhead Loves Macha advances this concept by spilling a single pseudo-song over 80--yes, my friends, 80--tracks. Fortunately, each track is very brief, so it doesn't take an unreasonable amount of time for this affectation to play itself out. Clever, yes. But one more death knell for the random button.