

Mp3 Cortez Del Mar - You Did This To Yourself

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From South Louisiana, Cortez Del Mar blends classic Americana and indie-rock; often described as "country noir," they're guaranteed to break your wicked little heart. 11 MP3 Songs ROCK: Americana, ROCK: Folk Rock Details: Dear Rock n Roll Answer Man: Im dead inside. Where my pulsing heart should be, there is instead only a howling void, tar-black and endless. I seek to fill this void, or at least to forget about it, via the dubious strategy of knowing more about new and hip music than anyone else in my steadily eroding circle of friends. However, the damn internet is making it hard for me to keep my edge, what with the Stereogums and the largeheartedboys and the free downloadable MP3s. Can you clue me in to something new so that I may indulge my tastes for gloatful crowing? In desperation, Lonely Hipster Dear Lonely Hipster: Your letter is well timed. Ive got just the thing for you. South Louisianas own alt-space-folk-indie-country-rockers Cortez Del Mar have released their debut album, You Did This To Yourself. I urge you to buy it. By this time next year, when everyones talking about that hot new band from Louisiana, you can already claimfalsely, I assure you to be over them. But I suspect mere urgings are not enough. No, you want to know what the record sounds like. Well, thats tricky, as the excessively hyphenated description of the band above should indicate. Beautifully produced at Fred Weavers Apocalypse the Apocalypse studio, this album is full of songs that sound like they began life as sturdy, well written, often downright clever country and pop-rock numbers churchgoing sorts, with slicked-down hair and clip-on ties who were then suckered into drinking acid-laced kool-aid at the junior prom, and now that theyre coming down from it they cant quite decide if they should head to confession or get back in the punch line again. If you imagine molasses being poured on cotton candy, and then you imagined that image didnt make you want to vomit, it might catch a little of the spirit of this records sound. Or, less biliously, it sounds a bit like the Merle Haggard greatest hits collection and the half-dozen Henry Mancini scores gathering dust in the Goodwills vinyl bin melted together in the last heatwave, and now someone in the back of the shop is testing out the warped and wobbly disc at 78 rpm. If youre the sort of person who wants to be able to identify that new single on the college rock station with a casual and cavalier confidence before the DJ spills the beans, youre going to want to pay close attention to Johnny and June

two-and-a-half minutes of greatness that at first comes across as a great lost Drive-By Truckers track but quickly proves to be a lot more limber than that description would indicate, with furious piano, boozy backing vocals, and a spry, spitting guitar solo. No tediously reverent cash-in on the Cash mania sweeping the country the last few years, this song sounds like its written from the perspective of a jilted June Carter suitor. It expresses a whole range of wronged-lover emotions, from an simmering suspicion (you wrote that song for Johnny bout the goddamn fiery ring) to resentment (someone elses song wont tell me whos to blame) to a kind of surprised hopefulness lying just on the other side of resignation (the burden Im shoulderin might get a little lighter). And the next time youre at a seedy bar and hear a bunch of drunk dudes at the table in the corner shout-singing See you around but tonight Ill just drink with my friends, well, youll know that Sea of Sound has made it to the jukebox where it belongs. Along with Johnny and June, songs like Burning Whiskey River and Denver (with its Zevon-invoking chorus, All I did in Denver was die) make it clear that Cortez is negotiating a musical landscape strewn about with the signifiers of music history, a setting that seems less like a postmodern supermarket and more like a noisy graveyard on Halloween, or maybe on the anniversary or Hank Williams death. Cortez Del Mar has decided not to whistle through this particular graveyard but rather to brazen right through the ranks of the wailing dead unmolested except, perhaps, for a covert slap on the back from a spectral palm or two on the way out. So look: its a pretty great album. There are drinking songs, mournful resignation songs (Way Down Here), hopeful songs (Bigger Skies), and, during the albums stomping, manic, closer, Cities of Gold." Im pretty sure I heard at least a couple of teeth being gnashed. Molars, probably. This is an album chock full of great lines about rusty bands of gold and bright eyes and stormclouds and welcoming sinners and sheltering saints and toasting things sinister and otherwise and bitterness down to the bone and learning to live with what weve done and leaving Madrid. So, Lonely Hipster, what are you waiting for? How do you think youre going to keep up if you dont get the record? You can buy a copy right now, at this very website, or pick one up at their shows throughout the Southland. Yours, PF

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