

Mp3 Via Satellite - Cities Are Temples

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This group is comprised of San Diego scene veterans DREW ANDREWS, TIM REECE of the ALBUM LEAF, and SCOTT MERCADO (the mastermind behind MANUOK). 10 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Ambient, ROCK: Progressive Rock Details: Drew Andrews: Vocals, guitar, laptop, keyboards Scott Mercado: Vocals, guitar, sampler keyboards Tim Reece: Drums, sampler There have been other incarnations of Via Satellite. Another lead singer. Two bassists long gone. But the Via Satellite that Drew Andrews, Scott Mercado and Tim Reece currently call home has become more than an assemblage of musical talent, it's become a brotherhood. The experimental rock symphony that the Via Satellite trio are conducting with their samplers and loops and laptops and guitars is rocketing the band past conventional musicality and into a universe all their own. "Via Satellite has had three stages of development," remembers Andrews. "We started with just hanging out and playing, getting into the studio, and then we began performing live and now we've moved on to this most important stage of just complete electronic reinvention. We're to the point where we want to tour and share the new music with everyone." At the inception of Via Satellite, things were tough. Personality clashes were par for the course with an ex-minister (Andrews), a lit major (Mercado) and an artist/psychologist (Reece) in the same room. There was never enough time to record when day jobs and different musical directions got in the way of tours and records and all the things that bands are wont to do. Then things started to click. Mercado and Andrews moved themselves into a dual-frontman setup and began to collaborate more prolifically. The music that began to come out was cinematic, a mix of ambient noise and art rock. National tours soon fell into place and the band was thrust into creative mode. In contrast to how unspectacular the band's journey to success has been - with the typical changing members, grinding day jobs and little time to record - the spectacular part has always been the music. "The hype was never what brought people to this band, it was the music," Reece says. "When we're in the studio, and even when we're just writing on our own, the creativity can be overwhelming," says Mercado. "We love to tinker with things - exotic instruments, electronics and things that people don't normally think of when they think of rock music. We've begun our own experimental incarnation of the band by just learning to play with things." "We also

have a blue collar work ethic," says Andrews. "We make our own packaging and art, design websites, remix our friends' music - putting our music out into the world ourselves. People respond when you have that much care and confidence in your work." While Reece and Andrews spend much of the year away from home as touring members of The Album Leaf, signed to Seattle's legendary Sub Pop label, and Mercado is busy with his solo project, Manuok, the trio considers their brotherhood in Via Satellite as their most important, and eclectic, endeavor. "We've seen a lot how this [music] industry works while we've been on the road with the Album Leaf," says Reece. "We've seen Europe and Japan and the U.S. and when we come back to making music with Via Satellite, I am always amazed by how three very different musicians can come together so succinctly. Watching two songwriters like Drew and Scott work together like they do, I really believe that this band has found a comfort zone that not many artists have found." Opening for bands such as Ester Drang, American Analog Set, The Blackheart Procession, The New Pornographers, No Knife, The Fruit Bats, and The Incredible Moses Leroy, Via Satellite has been busy on national tours since 2002. In the years since, the band has released two full-lengths and a remix album called re: Public that drew huge applause from critics and fans. With a dually delicate and expansive sound, Via Satellite is moving past the conventional four-man-band setup and past clean-cut rock 'n' roll. The band's penchant for mood and melody was well received by their hometown music scene, earning them radio play, press and honors at three consecutive San Diego Music Awards. Now the band is rightfully looking beyond San Diego and into the international horizon. Via Satellite continues to work with the Album Leaf's Jimmy LaValle and have gained dynamic perspective on their own music from international stints with Sigur Ros and others. "Jimmy always told us that Via Satellite is an amazing band," says Reece, "but he also said that it doesn't mean anything unless you're touring and always working on improving what you do." That perspective shows up on Via Satellite's upcoming release, Cities Are Temples, due out Feb. 1, 2005 on Loud and Clear Records in the U.S. and on DotLineCircle Records in Japan. In anticipation of Cities Are Temples, Via Satellite's mix of indie rock, ambient, and electronic sounds has people tuning in from all around the world to hear what they've come up with next. Are you listening?

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