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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012

Prima Donna - "Bless This Mess" CD Review (Acetate Records)



Prima Donna released their sophomore album *Bless This Mess* earlier this month on Acetate Records. While the band is often lumped in with bands from the Southern California post-punk scene, Prima Donna blurs the lines between glam-punk and garage rock similar to East Coast bands like The Strokes, D-Generation and Star Spangles.

Prima Donna is a five-piece band from L.A. that got together in 2003 and has toured aggressively with acts that include old-school punks like Glen

Matlock & the Philistines, Sham 69, The Undertones and Eddie and the Hot Rods. Prima Donna toured Europe and Asia in 2009-10 with Green Day and, adding to the Green Day connection, Prima Donna guitarist/vocalist Kevin Preston is a member of Foxboro Hot Tubs, which is Green Day's garage rock side project. Prima Donna was last in town in 2010 for a show at Bowery Electric and the band opened D-Generation's California shows on their recent reunion tour.

The twelve songs (47 minutes) on *Bless This Mess* grab the listener's attention as each song veers in different directions off of the band's garage/glam punk core so there is none of that post-punk "sameness" which has weighted down discs from other artists. Lyrically, the band's "mind" is firmly in the gutter with songs about sex ("Feral Children"), tumultuous relationships ("Put a, Te Amo") and the killing urge ("Sociopath"). Musically, Prima Donna touches on quirky new wave ("Sociopath"), Bowie & the Spiders gutter-glam ("Crimson Lust") and rich Beatles-style melodies and harmonies ("Maxine" and "Broken"). Adding to the mix, some songs feature predominate sax and organ/keyboards which leads to comparisons to the Heartbreakers or *Some Girls* era Rolling Stones and Kevin Preston delivers tracks "Feral Children" and "Miss Avenue" with a swagger that would make Johnny Thunders proud.

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