

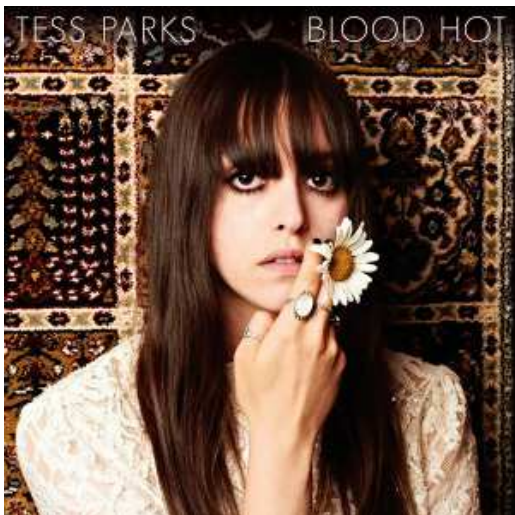
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By Dave Beech

November 04, 2013

Given that Canadian songstress **Tess Parks** cites **Oasis** as the sole reason she's making music in the first place, it seems fitting that she was one of the first acts to be signed to **359 Music**, the most recent label venture from **Cherry Red** and **Alan McGee**, founder of **Creation Records** – the label behind Oasis. However, while they might be Parks' biggest influence, the similarities are almost non-existent. Instead *Blood Hot*, Parks' debut, is full of psychedelic pop hooks and sludgy grunge guitars that find themselves effortlessly worked in next to each other, all the while Parks' trademark drawl is draped lavishly across the top.

Described by Tess herself as "the project my whole life has been leading up to" it goes without saying that each track feels meticulously composed, poured over, loved, without ever once losing it's sense of identity amidst polished production. Recently released single 'Someday' opens the album with a wonderfully lo-fi approach that carries on throughout the rest of the record and while this aesthetic is, by and large, a timeless production method, *Blood Hot* is very much a nostalgic album, a nod to those bands or artists that shaped Parks' through any given decade.

The hypnotic drone of 60s psych is a main staple of Parks' work, with tracks like 'When I Am Young' exhibiting it brilliantly. It's this that allows the record to flow cohesively, offset occasionally by a swift upping of tempo, such as that found in the **Pixies**-esque 'Open Your Mind', though never straying far beyond the realms of blissed out psychedelia.

In keeping with the sombre tone of the album, Parks maintains that the record “carried me through or helped me make sense of bad situations”, and it’s easy to see why. Downbeat yet in a calming, cathartic way, *Blood Hot* only occasionally hints at the turbulence from which it was conceived. ‘This Time Next Year’ ends with some particularly cacophonous guitar work whilst album closer ‘Love Around’ is almost entirely instrumental, building towards a tumultuous crescendo of wailing lead, pulsating rhythm and tenacious percussion, before fighting it’s way out of the dissonance and restoring the record’s equilibrium.

Blood Hot is an album which takes several listens before it’s true beauty really begins to shine through. Amidst the drones and feedback, the psychedelic whirrs and Park’s hypnotic vocal, there’s an incredible level of candour exhibited within the record that belies Tess’s relatively young age, and can’t truly be appreciated on just a couple of listens. It’s this candour, coupled with the sludgy, psychedelic spurring of her friends and backing band that make *Blood Hot* the album it is. Whilst it might be coming late to the game, it’s certainly one of the strongest debuts this year and well worth spending your time with.

Blood Hot is out on November 11 and is available to pre-order from amazon ([here](#)).



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