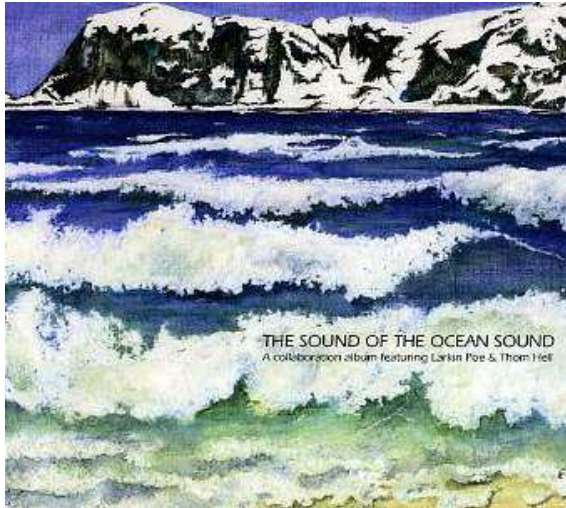


FAME Review: Larkin Poe & Thom Hell - The Sound of the Ocean Sound

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The Sound of the Ocean Sound

Larkin Poe & Thom Hell

Expression Records - EDVIN0012

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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If you want to know why Neil Young, Iain Matthews, and a number of others were so influential in the 60s and 70s, then you need to listen to this CD. Larkin Poe (a.k.a. The Lovell Sisters) and Thom Hell dish up an exquisitely flawless disc of novo-roots music in *The Sound of the Ocean Sound*, as refreshing as a new dawn and as luxurious as a bed of eider down. I wasn't at all prepared for this, as the liner art seemed to indicate possibly a New Agey thang, and the album's title was baffling. "What the hell???", I thought to myself as I removed the CD from its mailer. But when I popped it into the player...omigawd!

I refer to Neil and you can kinda maybe sorta infer Buffalo Springfield, more rightly Poco, and a bunch of others—and not, oddly enough CSNY—as somewhat sounding like this in their most florid moments, but, really, Larkin Poe & Hell are remarkably similar to two of my all-time favorite mello-rock/roots/folk ensembles: Matthews Southern Comfort and Plainsong. You don't want to know how many times I've spun those old LPs, it'd seem too fetishistic, but, man do I love those slabs! I think I have most everything Iain Matthews has ever done, but his days with Southern Comfort and Plainsong (with Andy Roberts) are magic. Those same bewitching sounds exude just as entrancingly from this unbelievably good set of Lovell/Hell songs.

Had no one told me who this was but said it featured Colin Linden, Steve Dawson, Lloyd Maines, or any of the heavy hitters, I wouldn't have doubted it for a second. Dazzling, just dazzling, yet nary a hint of any of those sturdy estimables anywhere, just Rebecca, Megan, and Thom amid a trio backing band and four sessioneers (incl. Sola Akingbola from Jamiroquai). There's even, to draw comparisons a bit closer to recenter times, a decent ambiance of October Project and Mary Fahl's inimitable sensibilities, but where OP's magisteriality was gloriously overblown, this klatsch lashes all skyward tendencies back down to an achingly earthy wistfulness.

2013 early on presaged itself as a bumper year for music, and it's already more than fulfilled that siren prophesy, but this—wait, let me brush the gauzy webs of delicious nostalgia from my eyes as *Ocean's* songs swirl around the living room—is going straight to my Top 20 for 2013 when December rolls around. The Lovells sing beautifully, with a good deal of mid-West soul looking back to madrigal, and Hell counterpoints them extremely well, then steps up to man or share the lead spots, as with the interplay in *P.S. I Love You*, hitting a surprising range from lower registers to falsetto. My my my, but no kidding: I get the same reaction listening to *The Sound of the Ocean Sound* that I got from *After the Gold Rush* and *Harvest*, all three in a league, not the same sound, yet evoking the exact same set of chills running up and down the spine.

Track List:

- I Belong To Love (Rebecca Lovell)
- houlder To Shoulder (M. Lovell / Taylor)
- P.S. I Love You (Rebecca Lovell)
- Leave (Thom Hell)
- I Can Almost (Megan Lovell)
- Tired (Thom Hell)
- As Good As You (R. Lovell / Hell)
- Missing Home (Thom Hell)
- Wait For Me (Megan Lovell)
- Widow's Walk (Rebecca Lovell)

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