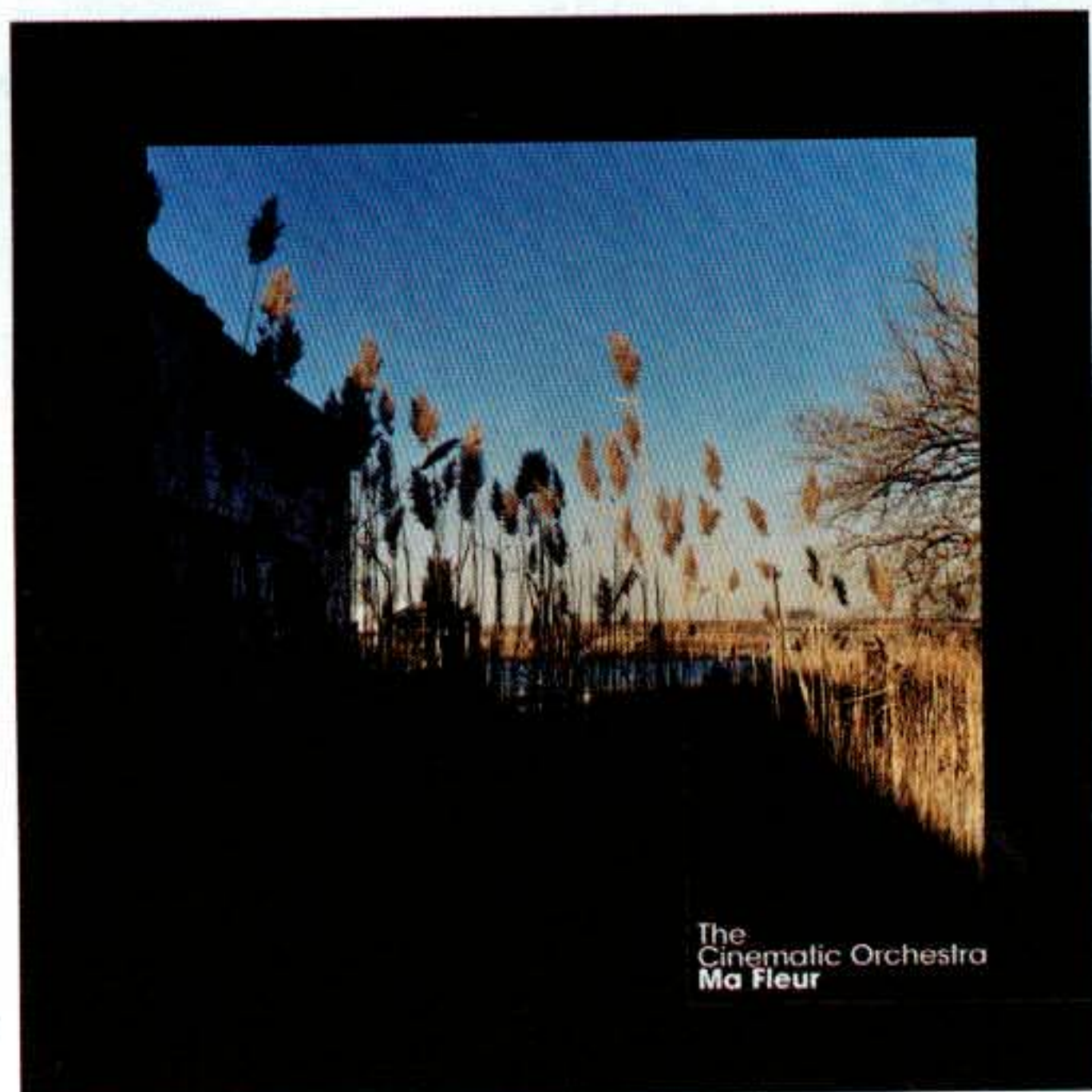


# Sound System

FOUR ALBUMS FOR HOT SUMMER DAYS & HOTTER SUMMER NIGHTS



**“Darkness hasn’t seemed so appealing since Morrissey.”**  
**–The Sterns’ *Sinners Stick Together***

## THE CINEMATIC ORCHESTRA

MA FLEUR

### Domino

Whether using a swirl of Nick Drake-like guitar (“Music Box”) or employing soulful vocals from Fontella Bass (“Familiar Ground”) the Cinematic Orchestra has their listener suspended in rare ether; a spiritual never-never land that transcends the dream world. TCO’s Jason Swinscoe had a fake screenplay written to help him compose this mostly instrumental effort so the ambient, free jazz and classical music heard here

accompanies the movie playing out in your head—only you get to write the screenplay.

## THE STERNS

*Sinners Stick Together*

### Omnirox

Boston’s Big Dig may be falling apart but the city has a big “dig it!” to the sound of the Sterns. A large dose of Strokes-like jangle pervades *Sinners Stick Together* but the quintet also often sounds very British. “*Sinners Stick Together*” is about having an affair with a nun but singer Chris Stern sings the song so elegantly that any sense of shame is

non-existent. Handclaps, blustery sax, and a dense mix of guitar, bass, and drums aid Stern in masking the depression of singing about everything from serial murder to Nigerian e-mail scams. Darkness hasn’t seemed so appealing since Morrissey.

## THE TWILIGHT SAD

*Fourteen Autumns & Fifteen Winters*

### FatCat

“Where are your manners?” Singer James Graham repeats the question about a dozen times as “Cold Days from the Birdhouse” fades out; it’s one of many notions of alienation that he chews on here. The fact that Graham is Scottish and sings with a heavy brogue adds volumes to the loneliness that drips from these songs; so does the use of elongated effects at song’s end, a technique that makes the music seem to evaporate into nothingness just like the singer’s hopes. Imagine Richard Thompson fronting the Coral and you have a hint at what *The Twilight Sad* is up to.

## VICTOR KRUMMENACHER

*The Cock Crows at Sunrise*

### Magnetic

Krummenacher helped shape the esoteric sound of Camper Van Beethoven but the weirdness is put aside here in favor of an Americana bent. The singer tosses languid guitar barbs at an insistent piano trill on

“Sunday Morning Blues” – the two instruments locked in a tug-of-war for a weary soul. “The Southern Heights,” too, is about a struggle for direction even though it is performed with a New Orleans’ *joie de vivre*.

