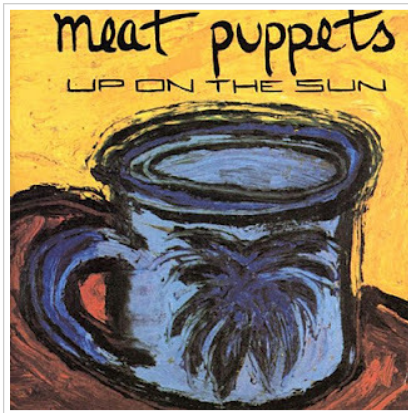




FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2012

## Meat Puppets - "Up On the Sun" CD Review (MVD Audio)

**DOWNLOAD:** Meat Puppets - Live @ McCabe's Guitar Show, Santa Monica, CA 5-3-85 (*Up on the Sun* tour)



In 1985, the Meat Puppets released their third full-length, *Up On the Sun*, and this disc was the turning point for the band's sound. There is no sign of the band's hardcore roots on any of the disc's twelve tracks as the music continues on the acid-drenched, country-punk path that the band started down on *Meat Puppets II*. The music on this disc has held up well over the years and there seems to be an ongoing debate among fans over whether this disc or *Meat Puppets II* is the band's strongest.

Looking back at this disc, it must be near impossible for anyone who wasn't there to understand how a bunch of speedballing freaks who were recording for Black Flag's label could transform themselves into a punk version of

the Grateful Dead. In an interview with Goldmine Magazine, Derrick Bostrom described some of the impetus behind the band's evolution in sound: "*Being with SST gave us the opportunity to do even more gigs, expand our base,*" Bostrom said. "*And also play to their audience, which we found somewhat distasteful. So it led us to, like, blow off punk rock, and kind of go into the more mainstream sound. We started doing country-rock, or Creedence-y sort of stuff, or whatever we're kind of still known for [today].*"

Curt's cover art for *Up On the Sun*, which shows a coffee mug adorned with a pot leaf, establishes the mood for this disc. Cris and Curt mix intertwined, noodling jams with mellow vocals and deliciously off-key harmonies to come up with a sound that pre-dates the "jam bands" that started to surface in the later part of the 80's. The music, which is a mixture of mellow jams and blissed-out shoegazing, combined with Curt's surrealist lyrics led Robert Christgau to declare "*Curt Kirkwood is the David Thomas of endearing sloppiness*."

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