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Snakes & Music

Isabelle

(Universal Warning)

US release date: 29 August 2006

by Jason MacNeil

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I hate records that you can instantly get a feel for and sink your teeth into; they often leave you disappointed at the end. And the title track from this album certainly is the former. It's an incredibly brilliant piece of rock that has some moxie and oomph. But *Snakes & Music* won't disappoint, not by a couple of country kilometers. Fans of early Sloan would soak these tunes up immediately, judging by the mid-tempo melancholy indie rock of "Please Explain". Crisp, smart, and polished, *Snakes & Music* nails the early songs with aplomb, particularly the somewhat winding "Hope Texas Treats You Like a Queen". And all of these songs are well-developed and fleshed out, not abruptly shut down the way other bands often do. A Delta boogie instrumental foot-stomper *a la* B.R.M.C.'s "Ain't No Easy Way" entitled "Take Me Down to the River" ensues prior to the straightforward "Sinking Ships" and semi-bombastic "Treading Water". A couple of numbers veer into alt.country or Americana, including "Heavy Strings". The album's best moments come with "Philadelphia", a song that majestically builds and builds while gracefully shifting gears. The lone lapse in judgment is the lackadaisical "Cleaning Up the Mess".



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["I Should Have Looked Both Ways Before I Crossed You" \[MP3\]](#)

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— 17 August 2006

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