



DEADSTRING BROTHERS SÃO PAULO

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST 31, 2009 (EUROPE)

*Oh that lady, lord, she let me go
She laid me down, in pure white snow
But in the spring time, I'll go down
To São Paulo*

—“São Paulo”

From the classic rock echoes that hang heavy like the reefer smoke in the rafters of Detroit's Cobo Hall, to the soul reflected in the alleys and small faces of London's Heavy Load scene to the exile off Main Street, few bands channel the sonic groove generated at the headwaters of our rock-and-roll DNA like Deadstring Brothers. They know that rock-and-roll is both disease and redemption, penalty and reward, intoxicant and hangover. They know that a powerhouse hook exhilarates even as you're getting kicked in the heart. The Brothers, in their leather boots and frayed jeans, tenaciously trudge through the oil slick puddles of a dying city, the hard light splitting into prismatic rainbows, finding beauty in decay.

By using the studio as an instrument like they never have before, Deadstring Brothers have made *São Paulo*, their third album for Bloodshot Records, a record for the classic rock fan in all of us, but never stoops to mimicry. Just check out the stoner exoticism of the title track, in all its fever dreams and revelatory thunder, the Leon Russell-inflected boogie of “Smile” or the comforting guitar crunch and soaring organ riffs in “The River Song” that speak to riding the open road in a ragtop as well as the sooty factory that made it all possible.

Lying at the (battered) heart of the record is singer/guitarist **Kurt Marschke**. When he sings “I can kneel

down, but I just can't pray” on “It's a Shame,” you're hearing a man bloodied and bowed. “Yesterday's Style” is the sound of a soul breaking, a glassy-eyed 1,000 yard stare, the ache coming through the speakers. Somehow, though, he manages to pull together the remaining shards of his dignity to look forward and carry on in the closing track “Always A Friend of Mine,” a song so good it should skate into the pantheon of country rock classics.

Joining Kurt in the band are longtime drummer and fellow Detroiter Travis Harrett, and the brothers Cullum—Spencer (guitar, pedal steel and slide guitar) and Jeff (bass). The Cullums, a couple of London lads, came into the Deadstring fold during a UK tour in 2006. Both were mainstays in the burgeoning Heavy Load scene built around a communal love of all things Stones, Crowes and Allmans.

It was love at first jam and the boys joined up and bridged the waters between London and Detroit in time to record their second album *Silver Mountain*. *São Paulo* marks their full integration to the band, and it shows, with the majority of the record's songs being co-writes with Kurt.

São Paulo understands the liberation borne of mourning, that an elegy cannot truly soar without jarring adversity to buoy it. Built on the ample shoulders of masterful forebears, Deadstring Brothers delve into the grit and sweat of dirty blues scooped from the fields of the Delta and polish it in the toxic waters of the Detroit River; the smell of their motor oil, strong coffee and whiskey-stained beards narcotic.

FOR PRESS NEEDS, contact:

Marah Eakin
marah@bloodshotrecords.com

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Bloodshot Records 3039 W. Irving Park Rd, Chicago, IL 60618
Ph: 773-604-5300 Fax: 773-604-5019 Web: www.bloodshotrecords.com

