



BOTTLE ROCKETS NOT SO LOUD

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The Bottle Rockets have been making some of the most incisive, literate and lighter-raising American music for going on eighteen years now. And some of the loudest, with a reputation built on a rough and tumble snarl honed by a thousand nights on stages around the world. But that only speaks to part of the story of the Bottle Rockets. So many bands, when you unplug the amps, you find that the emperor has no clothes, that the songs collapse in the quiet; it was the thrill of the tables rattling and ears ringing that sold the goods; the cold of the beer, the heat of the moment.

Not So Loud, recorded in an acoustic setting at a 19th century schoolhouse in their home base of St. Louis, reveals a body of work steeped in the history of, and fitting easily into, the finest traditions of American folk music. It is a dimension of the Bottle Rockets easily overlooked when you're getting caught up in their riffs that tap so easily into our musical DNA, but it is an entirely fresh inroad to the strengths in their songwriting and musicianship.

Pulling from all eras of their acclaimed catalog, including classics from seminal albums long out of print, *Not So Loud* re-casts Bottle Rockets' songs with lyrical and rhythmic nuances that will surprise both longtime fans and those who might have dismissed them as "just another bar band." The band's lyrics, which flow between the sharp and the sympathetic, shine in this new environment. The hard-luck populism of "Lucky Break" and "Kerosene" would not be out of place on Springsteen's *Nebraska*, and "Smokin' 100's Alone" sounds like it could have been kicking around Kristofferson's pad in his '70's heyday. The stripped down sound heightens the poignancy of songs like

"Mom & Dad" and the Doug Sahm cover "I Don't Want To Go Home." "1000 Dollar Car," one of their signature tunes that usually packs a Crazy Horse-inflected sonic wallop, lopes up to the back porch yet keeps the inherent disgust and gallows humor intact. "Kit Kat Clock," from their essential *24 Hours A Day* album, recalls a lazy summer afternoon, but with a sadness easily missed in the rave up original. Throw in Brian Henneman's engaging and sometimes very personal banter between songs, and *Not So Loud* becomes a genuinely intimate affair. And for those who think unplugged albums are staid, mellow affairs, we submit that the banjo-fired throwdown of "Rural Route," even without electricity, raises a serious racket befitting their rock and roll lineage.

With a lineup that has solidified over the past few albums (2006's *Zoysia* and 2009's *Lean Forward*), featuring original members Brian and drummer Mark Ortmann, with guitarist John Horton and bassist Keith Voegele, the band may have turned down for this album, but they aren't slowing down. The recording of *Not So Loud* took place at the Lucas School House in the historic Soulard district of St. Louis and, over the course of two nights, allowed the band a rare opportunity to re-visit and re-imagine songs that have grown dear to Rockets fans over the years. *Not So Loud* clarifies what Bottle Rockets fans have long known, that there is more to the band's enduring appeal than riffs and volume, there is the strength of, and in, their songwriting and stories.

PREVIOUS RELEASES:

BS157 BOTTLE ROCKETS *LEAN FORWARD*
BS127 BOTTLE ROCKETS *ZOYSIA*
BS086 BOTTLE ROCKETS *SONGS OF SAHM*

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