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Box of Secrets

Blood Red Shoes



Brighton duo Laura-Mary Carter and Stephen Ansell are Blood Red Shoes, named after a snippet of Hollywood folklore describing the time Ginger Rogers rehearsed for a show until her feet bled. Grunge kids through and through, supremely lazy comparisons with the White Stripes because of the male/female duo guitar and drums setup are completely off the mark - think Pixies/Sonic Youth guitars and drums with riot grrl meets Bloc Party shouty vocals and killer melodies.

The pair keep things simple and intricate all at once - Carter moves deftly between catchy riffs, heavy chords and picked sections on guitar, keeping the interest up without having to resort to vast amounts of layering. Traditionally speaking there are gaps where the bass “should be”, but between the lively vocals, devilish harmonies and rhythmic handclaps there’s enough going on that the sparse musical arrangements just seem to work.

Blood Red Shoes bring the angry, angsty grunge element to supremely danceable tunes. Where their subject matter could equally suit some wilfully anti-commercial dirges (and probably still sound great), songs like ‘Say Something, Say Anything’ pound along joyfully, blissfully ignorant of Ansell’s anguished vocal performance. ‘Doesn’t Matter Much’ swaggers filthily around neat call and response vocals and rhythmic, bloodcurdling “Yeah”s with some addictive melodies finishing the whole thing off very nicely.

Carter’s low-end riffing on ‘ADHD’ is a great example of how a well-wielded guitar can cover all the bases (no pun intended), providing a sturdy support to some excellent vocal arrangements including some wonderfully furious ranty yelling. ‘I Wish I Was Someone Better’ is another belter, opening with supremely dirty guitar and manic dual vocals, the repetitive lyrical segments reinforcing the sense of purpose throughout the song.

A break from the frenetic pace of the album comes in the form of the wonderful ‘This Is Not For You’, Carter brimming with bitter disappointment as she describes the end of a relationship, focusing on maintaining her distance and independence from her ex-beau: “I don’t want you to think I do the things I do because of you”. It’s a wonderfully evocative song and one of my favourites on the album, paired neatly with the genius ‘It’s Getting Boring By The Sea’ - an anti-ode to Brighton perchance? “Let’s consider a change of scenery / It’s getting boring by the sea”, goes the vocal scrawl over a riotous backdrop of rolling drums and frantic guitar. Great stuff.

The name says it all - Blood Red Shoes make music you’ll dance to til you bleed. Enjoy.

Blood Red Shoes *Box of Secrets* track listing:

1. I Wish I Was Someone Better
2. Doesn’t Matter Much
3. You Bring Me Down
4. Try Harder
5. Say Something, Say Anything
6. I Wish I Was Someone Better
7. Take The Weight
8. ADHD
9. This Is Not For You



10. It's Getting Boring By The Sea
11. Forgive Nothing
12. Hope You're Holding Up

Try Blood Red Shoes if you like: Sonic Youth, Le Tigre, Babes In Toyland, Bloc Party, The Pixies

Review by *Laura Kidd*

