

Elephant Revival



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**Petals** THIRTY TIGERS



**Petals** finds **Elephant Revival** more confident and assured than ever, affirming their affinity for hushed circumspect

without sacrificing their trademark allure. If anything, the new album explores somewhat darker scenarios, a sound that's seemingly at odds with their populist appeal. Indeed, they ply their skills with such subtlety and finesse that the results are consistently mesmerizing throughout. Singer **Bonnie Paine**'s waif-like vocals bear a distinct similarity in style to Feist, while her male foil, multi-instrumentalist **Charlie Rose**, steers the sound toward a burnished folk approach that maintains its wistful yet upturned gaze. Songs such as "Peace Tonight," "On and On" and "Season Song" feel like meditative hymns, flush with both reverence and wonder. Granted, it's not the jolliest motif—only the gentle pluck and ramble of "Furthest Shore" and the swelled harmonies of "Sea Monster" lift the tempo to any great degree—but the music remains haunting and provocative nonetheless. Indeed, it's hardly possible to listen to a track like "Hello You Who" with its opening swirl of cellos and chamber-approved strings, and not feel like something ominous is waiting in the wings. Indeed, once experienced, this particular pachyderm is hard to forget.

*Lee Zimmerman*