TEXAS MUSIC

WILD CHILD

The Runaround

NOISE COMPANY

Don't be deceived by the hooks, harmonies and handclaps — *The Runaround* is about as hopeful as its title suggests, an artfully sweet-sounding lesson in lies and lovers who are never sure or satisfied. Following in the vein of their 2011 debut *Pillow Talk*, lead vocalists Alexander Beggins and Kelsey Wilson are equal parts poignant and playful as they trade sweet nothings, whistled choruses and cynical confessions over lush soundscapes of ukulele, violin, cello and banjo. Rich, legato strings counterbalance the delicately plucked strums of "Victim to Charm," as the spurned Wilson croons, "Boy, I hear she's the one / Crazy how fast you knew once we were done" while "Anna Maria" offers a peppy, xylophone-tinged ode to infidelity. Meanwhile, numbers like the dreamy, homesick "Stitches" are surprisingly sarcasm-free: "I need to come back 'cause the road's too hard / Too many sinners and too many bars." Even when the melancholy borders on monotonous, it's hard not to love Wild Child simply for exploring so much of this grey space. Passion thrives on a sense of uncertainty that's simultaneously terrifying and freeing — or, as Wilson muses in the pulsing finale "Left Behind," "We're never who we think we are / 'cause we were born to change our minds." — **ALLIE EISSLER**