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Reviews

ESSENTIAL ATHENS ROCK

Futurebirds

Baba Yaga FAT POSSUM



Your typical alt-country bar band audience isn't going to be all that enthralled with frictionless, esoteric fare, just like your average psychedelic, art-rock crowd isn't going to go gaga for thoroughly down-to-earth music. Two EPs and a pair of albums into their career, Athens, Ga.'s

Futurebirds have a pretty solid grasp on how to split the difference. *Baba Yaga*—their first Fat Possum release—has a little something for everyone who's ever found anything to like on The Byrds' iconic 1968 album *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*. *Baba Yaga* unfolds at a languid pace without losing its rock attack. Some of the shaggy, occasionally surreal songwriting even makes room for red-blooded, countrified hooks. But it's the spindly Telecaster figures and the crystalline arcs of steel guitar—all of it positively doused in reverb—that do the most for the album's allure. **Jewly Hight**