

PENTHOUSE®



OVER THE RHINE
BLOOD ORANGES
IN THE SNOW
GREAT SPECKLED DOG

★★★

Christmas music has long fascinated Linford Detweiler and Karin Bergquist, the husband-and-wife folk duo known as Over the Rhine. They've found that the happy-jolly or sacred-solemn sounds of the holiday's traditional tunes don't always square with the actual experience of Christmas with the family. So, over three Christmas albums—this being the third—they've created “reality Christmas” music: stately, melancholy songs that lean more toward the somber than the sunny. “First Snowfall,” in which “the Christmas decorations look ragged and rusty,” is a prime example, as is the Merle Haggard cover “If We Make It Through December,” which laments “Daddy can't afford no Christmas here.”