

Fullers Earth CD Ain't No Kitty Litter



DISCourse

with Bill Polonsky

The name Fullers Earth has its history in the wool trade as highly absorbent claylike substance. Another of its uses is in the manufacture of cat litter ... though I would be hesitant to draw any unnecessary references or conclusions.

What does come to mind when listening to Fullers Earth is the polished progressive nature of its sound.

The band, essentially a power trio of guitar bass and drums with

added vocals, has captured the essence of several sounds.

The overall feeling of Fullers Earth is it has successfully channeled the deep jangle of Seattle's grunge scene with its tuned-down and faintly discordant mix of guitar and bass.

Guitarist Michael Sprague keeps the crunch alive with a hard hollow tube amp sound adding intervals and spice of 80s style guitar. I'm glad to report on this subject that at no point does Sprague devolve into said 80s style guitar flourish that Frank Zappa called: the Mongolian string benders.

That sad history of music is past and if I may be allowed to go further, a history that sounded boringly academic in a genre that should have maintained its dignified rebellious roots.

Rock on, Mr. Sprague.

Calvin Dixon and John Simmons, drums and bass respectively, carry

the bottom end of this sound with defined heaviness.

The drums are mixed right out where they should be. Dixon delivers tempo changes effortlessly, a good sign of arrangement and a credit to the drummer who steps up to carry them out.

The bass never dawdles in the background, Simmons is right out there with the rest of the band creating signatures that weave around the beat to compliment the entire sound.

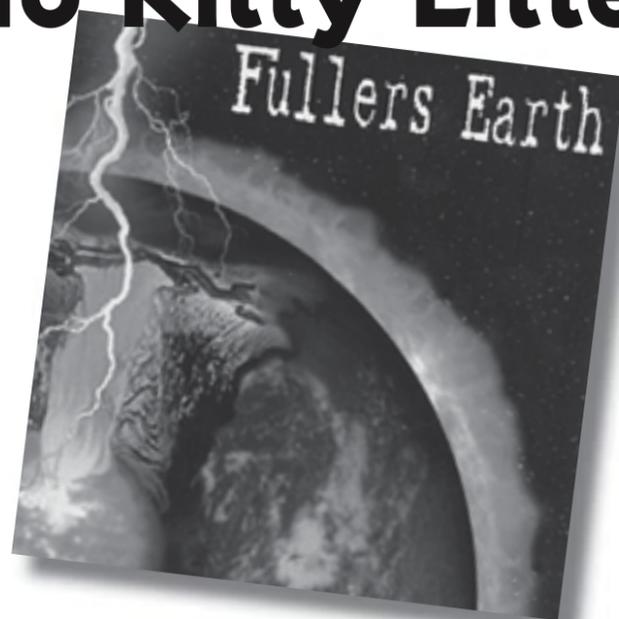
The guitar-bass-drum power base is tempered by vocalist Les Walkers vocals.

Walker has a powerful voice that stays true and articulate, perhaps a bit tame at times, he never lets his instrument wander into that miasma of annoying hair band shrieking.

Walker stays on track and lets the words speak for themselves. He has a style of singing that reminds me of The Tragically Hip's Gordon Downie.

The cover art of the CD depicts the planet Earth, bathed in fire, melting by the stroke of lightning.

Despite this, Fullers Earth holds out a hand to tomorrow. There is a



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complicated sense of self throughout the words spoken.

With lyrics that speak with a voice of reflection and attitude, the hope for a better tomorrow and taking strength from family, I wonder what awaits this band given a bit of seasoning.

With all these elements in play,

it is no wonder that Fullers Earth delivers a great first CD.

Fullers Earth will be playing as part of the Sunstroke Music Festival being held at Shipyards Park on June 23. Call Jordie Jones at Triple J's for details.

Visit Bill Polonsky's website at www.strangethingsdone.com.

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