



B I O G R A P H Y

BLIND MELON

GLEN GRAHAM ♦ DRUMS
SHANNON HOON ♦ VOCALS
BRAD SMITH ♦ BASS
ROGERS STEVENS ♦ GUITAR
CHRISTOPHER THORN ♦ GUITAR

When it really clicks, when it comes together naturally and of its own accord, music is the ultimate magic. Not like a magic trick, mind you, but the mystical, otherworldly kind. When unforced and unpremeditated, its power is rooted in raw honesty and pure passion. And when it really clicks, music creates an uncontrollable reaction, touching hidden feelings, reaching reclusive emotions, and sparking distant memories. It's like feeling your way through a darkened carnival, then accidentally tripping a switch that at once turns on every flashing light, every spinning wheel, and all the breathtaking rides. You're assaulted. You're moved. You're blown away.

The members of **Blind Melon** -- singer Shannon Hoon, guitarists Rogers Stevens and Christopher Thorn, bassist Brad Smith and drummer Glen Graham -- believe in that magic. On their self-titled debut, produced by Rick Parasher (Pearl Jam, Temple Of The Dog), they share a collection of songs that is infused with a deep and engaging intimacy. Furthermore, they combine a physical and spiritual approach to their music, resulting in a totally harmonious blend of varying moods, diverse influences and constantly intermingling rhythms and melodies. The tones often recall the flow and free spirit of pioneering bands from the late '60s and early '70s, but the overall sound is totally contemporary. Their unique mix is one of folkie melodies and acoustic arrangements stirred up by hard, electric riffs and neatly busy sound montages involving the whole group. It's an uplifting and moving experience, an easy record to listen to. And a very easy record to get lost in.

"I love putting on a record or going to hear a band play live and time freezes," says Glen. "You're just listening, being absorbed in it. And when it's over, you have this catharsis. I love being refreshed by music."

Shannon has his own term for the experience. "Mental recess," he calls it. "Something that takes your head away."

As you will hear, **Blind Melon** does take you places with their music. The songs reach out like a friendly hand and listening to **Blind Melon** becomes a warming experience. Shannon's vocals

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soar and dive, playing with -- and against -- the surrounding music like a separate instrument. The harmonies fly and float. Rogers and Christopher supply rhythmic grooves that jump in and out and solos that are always tasteful. And Brad and Glen are a pivotal rhythm section, loose and ready to spin in any direction when necessary, but firm on a steady stretch. The instrumental excursions, like the spry groove on the "Holy Man," always carry a spontaneous feel. It's a freshness that doesn't go away with repeated listening.

"I like it when I can hear something 50 times," Rogers explains, "and on the fiftieth listen, I'll hear a different little thing in the background that I didn't hear before. Maybe there's a melody going in one ear that you didn't hear before."

It's that element of surprise that drives their live show, as listeners who caught the MTV "120 Minutes" tour earlier this year learned. Even within the confines of an opening time slot, Blind Melon turned each set into an exclusive experience. During a performance, the group is likely to break into an inspired, impromptu jam at any moment. Shannon's actions alone are about as easy to predict -- and keep up with -- as a "Ren & Stimpy" cartoon. On-stage, the music and the moment dictate the proceedings, creating an element of surprise an air of danger. From beginning to end, it's always about the music with Blind Melon.

"I'm gonna run from my home/Jump in the river/And let the water soak the sin in my soul," Shannon sings on "Soak The Sin," the album's opening song. The lines are typical of the strong, personal imagery in their lyrics.

"The writing is kind of ambiguous," Shannon allows. "Anybody can read it and find something that they need in one line and then find something else in the next line."

"It's definitely like that," Rogers agrees. "I think that just about everybody will find something that they can relate to on this record."

Picture a psychedelic picnic on a floating dreamscape with colors only music can paint and only your mind can see. It's a good workout for your imagination. So is listening to Blind Melon. Ultimately, it comes down to taking the hand the songs are lending. "Enter the game and play it as you will," Shannon says. So play. After all, it's mental recess and Blind Melon want to take your head away.

And if you're lucky, the music might just do your head in.

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