

FLAIR



rhythm & rhetoric by Paul Curl



AS TALL AS LIONS CREATES MASTER- FUL DISK

*"As Tall As Lions" by As Tall As
Lions (Triple Crown/East West)*

On its self-titled sophomore effort, As Tall As Lions has created a masterful record with a rich blend of dynamic music that is in turn intimate and epic, delicate and powerful, accessible and adventurous.

Hailing from Long Island, N.Y., the indie rock quartet — Daniel Nigro (vocals, guitar, piano), Saen Fitzgerald (guitar), Cliff Sarcona (drums) and Julio Tavarez (bass, vocals) — delivers well-penned love songs with sweeping, yet restrained, orchestration and yearning vocals.

Nigro's silvery voice is strong, clear and passionate. And while As Tall As Lions most assuredly is a rock band, Nigro alters the meter and inflection of his broad-ranging vocals in a style more akin to R&B. In so doing, he adds emotional depth to the songs' themes of loves lost, found and unrequited.

On most tracks, the band gradually weaves dreamy piano, guitar, guitar loops and bass lines into a vast swirling mass of beautifully shimmering sound. Yet, the crescendos just touch the face of cacophony before returning to a delicate refrain.

But As Tall As Lions hardly plays it safe. While pop is the main sensibility on the record, there is an abundance of edgy instrumentation and vocal treatments shared by the likes of Radiohead, Doves, The Flaming Lips and early U2. And on "Ghost of York" and "Be Here Now" ATAL shows it isn't afraid to implement some seriously fast and beefy rhythm guitar work to occasionally blow the doors off the hinges.

However, the piano-based "Love, Love, Love (Love, Love)," which isn't even close to being the best song on the record, has the broadest popular appeal. Around what sounds like a full choir layering the song's obvious chorus, Nigro repeatedly testifies "I'll keep you in my focus with love and affection."

The song has an inspiring and uplifting quality, as do most of the songs on the disk. And each song, including a hidden track, is top notch.

For information, visit www.astallasions.com, www.myspace.com/astallasions or www.triplecrownrecords.com.