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AS TALL AS LIONS: "YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU"



It's always fun to listen to As Tall As Lions. They have a very polished pop sound, but it's mish-mash all sorts things that sound as though they shouldn't go together. Somehow though, ATAL makes it work, and the music is all the more interesting for it.

"You Can't Take It With You" is neither a step back nor a progression from their sophomore self-titled album,

but it's hard to fault them for that. With as much as ATAL's songs have going, throwing too many curveballs into the mix would likely result in a total mess.

The album dawns with the lovely "Circles," which strolls out of the gates with some lovely ambling guitar and pounding percussion, but gradually picks up some steam as it roars down the tracks with zagging guitar and soaring vocals.

We hear a bit of genre blending with "Is This Tomorrow?" featuring an old school keyboard tear and

distorted bass rip. "In Case of Rapture" is a masterpiece, with a steady hum of bouncy drums and shimmering guitar launching it into outer space.

Singer Dan Nigro may be the key piece to the puzzle. His earnest shivers and heartbroken calls are hauntingly gorgeous and lift the band above the grey.

So despite a bit of a stall in growth, and a few forgettable tracks, "You Can't Take It With You" is an admirably unique listening experience delivered with winning sincerity and zeal.

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You Can't Take It With You

As Tall as Lions

Triple Crown

On *You Can't Take It With You*, Long Island-based foursome As Tall as Lions' third full-length for semi-indie label Triple Crown, the band pulls off a pretty impressive combination. ATAL distills the essence of such current mid-fi indie-rock darlings as Bon Iver, Portugal The Man and Broken Social Scene, and then applies a high-fidelity Brit-pop sonic filter,

MUSIC with the result being a somewhat perplexing but mostly enjoyable record. At times, the band seems almost consumed by its own eclecticism, not to mention ambition—the record took almost three years, and multiple producers, to complete. But frontman Dan Nigro's buttery, Jeff Buckley-esque vocals would be hard to resist under any circumstance, and when ATAL dials back the weirdness a tad to reveal the soft, accessible, creamy center, you see why the band may indeed be the future of rock. At present, however, it brings to mind the words of the great Marty McFly: "I guess you guys aren't ready for that yet. But your kids are gonna love it."

—Daniel Taylor

