

venuszine

Fall 2008

SOUNDS



MOTHER MOTHER

O My Heart

(Last Gang)



It's not often that a band is actually unique *and* unclassifiable, but Vancouver-based Mother Mother might just be one such group. On their sophomore disc, *O My Heart*, the quintet provides a smattering of pure pop, mellow ambience, and glam rock.

Mother Mother's oddball pop makes for an engaging listen, especially due to the vocal interplay of the group's three singers that include founder and de facto frontman-guitarist Ryan Guldemon, his sister Molly, and their family friend Debra-Jean Creelman. The trio's unconventional harmonies alternate from off-kilter mewling yelps (the title track which, in a perfect world, will be an alt-rock radio favorite) to pure sweetness (album closer, "Sleep Awake," with vocals reminiscent of Innocence Mission's Karen Peris).

The closest approximation to the group's sound would be to dump the Starlight Mints, Queen, and the aforementioned Innocence Mission into a Cuisinart on

mix. But like any homemade milkshake, there are still chunks that haven't quite blended and certain influences remain stronger than others. Like the Starlight Mints, Mother Mother is a quirky band that specializes in unexpected tempo shifts and stylistic veers, never allowing one musical style to become too prevalent. While the twang interludes of "Wrecking Ball" is a nod and wink to Emmylou Harris fans, "Ghosting" subtly references classical music. Such genre melding usually brings messy noise but in the hands of Mother Mother, it's sheer genius. — KIM NEWMAN