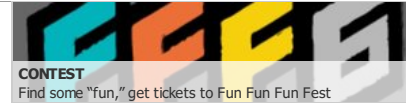




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Loud Enough



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By Erik Adams May 20, 2011

These days, **The Midgetmen** communicate with the outside world largely through design-geek type-treatments and healthy dosages of self-deprecation (plus a fairly entertaining **Twitter feed**). The new LP by Austin's premier purveyors of unaffected indie rock, *Loud Enough*, announces itself in much the same way: The postcard attached to review copies begins, "You've possibly and likely ignored our first three albums. It happens." *Loud Enough* has its own ignorable corners—the buzzsawing goof "Sword Fight" merits at least one spin, though—but they're drowned out by moments that prove the band members don't have to be so goddamn humble all the time.

Chief among those is the album's general sense of place and purpose: Approaching its ninth anniversary, the band has grown (relatively) gracefully into the occasionally reliable, always fun older brother of the Red River scene. Pitched somewhere between the domesticated mistress of **The Gary** and the middle-class anthems of **Fountains Of Wayne's *Welcome Interstate Managers***, tracks like "Beer's Gone" and "Glue Factory" are sing-alongs for aging punks who've lost some of their fight—but none of their smart-ass sense of humor. (See also: the aforementioned "Sword Fight.") The mood gets a little more dour on slow-burning standout "Wheeling Downs," but its racetrack metaphor is eventually overtaken by a surging, tallboy-hoisting **Stooges** subversion. The Midgetmen don't want to be your dog, and as per **Pavement**-esque closing track "The Dream," the band still operates by way of a rock 'n' roll fantasy—albeit one where the ultimate destination is "home." Humility suits *Loud Enough*, but its in moments like this where it deserves to be cast in a more triumphant light—preferably something that goes with a handsome typeface.

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Loud Enough
Self-released

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