

BAWN in the MASH -Welcome to the Atomic City-FC-906

www.bawninthemash.com OR www.myspace.com/bawninthemash

Playing Time - 48:05

Together as a group since 2005, Bawn in the Mash kicks off their set with a hand-me-down, "Sail Away Sally," that appears to be a nod of respect for the traditional spirits and distillers of western Kentucky's musical roots. Their original acoustic music with elements from various genres has some relaxed sparkle and a friendly intimacy. Bawn in the Mash is Josh Coffey (violin, mandolin), Nathan Lynn (guitar), Tommy Oliverio (mandolin), Alex Faught (banjo), and Eddie Coffey (bass, guitar). In some songs, Coffey and Oliverio share the mandolin breaks. All band members have compositions on "Welcome to the Atomic City." A few have catchy little melodies that are carefully cultivated, even if they don't have them fully polished instrumentally and vocally. Still, their wry quirkiness creates an earthy kind of ambiance. "Livin' in Yesterday" has doo-wop vocals with the dichotomy of twin fiddles to build a mood for a love-starved and deserted drunkard. The rough edges of Oliverio's "Musical Moon" are smoothed with his own conversational vocal refrain.

Produced by old-time banjo champ Dan Knowles of Tennessee), the band recorded "Welcome to Atomic City" in ten sessions over a three month period. Alex Faught's instrumental "Poundcake" is a clever tune that gives everyone a piece of the action. The album's intent was to historically interpret and fictitiously describe events that could have occurred during the past 150 years around western Kentucky. "At the Hotel Irvin Cobb" speaks to a 1937 flood, cats and dogs sleeping on the roof, and being able to get anything you want at the historic inn. With an appeal to younger crowds, a ditty like "Hey John" gives every instrumentalist in the band a chance to wash a few blues away with their breaks. Nathan Lynn does most of the lead singing, and he is able to describe some picturesque storybook scenes in songs like "The Land Between the Rivers" and "Tow" and "Paducah." Their homebase of Paducah, Ky. lies in a region called the land of four rivers (Clarks, Ohio, Tennessee, and Cumberland). Eddie Coffey sings his own "Mary Jane." What he lacks in grace is replaced with a directness and grit. An interesting sparse duo arrangement of "Past the Painted Wall" teams Josh Coffey's lead vocal and mandolin with his father Eddie Coffey's bass and guitar. Not a wildly triumphant debut, but still they manage to put their own original stamp on string band sounds in a musical makeover that was still "bawn in the mash." As their music continues to brew, distill, refine and purify, it will only get better. They have managed to extract an essence of western Kentucky's traditional heritage and condense it all into something of their very own. (Joe Ross)