

# Burning Hearts

## Aboa Sleeping

Countless throughout the history of pop are the people who have remarked about the apparent effortless with which the Nordic countries make music whose melodiousness, grace, and sheer indelibility is beyond compare. Whether ABBA, *The Cardigans*, and *Club 8*—Acid House Kings—Legends axis (Sweden), or a-ha, Sondre Lerche, and *Kings of Convenience* (Norway), these are artists who, whether abiding by tradition or skewering it in previously unimaginable ways, create songs that evoke a brighter life — a life full of more drama, more comedy, more love and loves lost.

But relatively unsung amidst its northern European neighbors is Finland, despite it being home to dozens of bands that are the equals — if not the superiors — of their globally famous contemporaries. Two apt cases in point: *Le Futur Pompiste*, which released one marvelous album in 2004, *Your Stories and Your Thoughts*, before the vagaries of adult life scattered them far and wide; and *Cats on Fire*, whose debut long-player, 2007's *The Province Complains*, captivated all who were lucky enough to hear it (among them the writers at superlative U.K. magazine *The Word*). It was inevitable that this pair of bands, whose music shares a poise and sophistication rarely heard anywhere, never mind within the modest environs of Finland, would find each other. When they did, two members — *Cats on Fire* drummer and multi-instrumentalist Henry Ojala, and *Le Futur Pompiste* singer Jessika Rapo — decided to make yet more music on their own. The result is *Burning Hearts*.

"We grew up in neighboring cities in the province of Ostrobothnia, in the Swedish-speaking parts of Finland, before we moved to the southern part of the country," Henry says of himself and Jessika. "We were both in bands as teenagers, and we met occasionally at concerts and through friends. But it wasn't until 2004, when *Le Futur Pompiste* and *Cats on Fire* toured together in Sweden, that we got to know each other better." Recently, Jessika has been touring with *Cats*, and she also appears on *The Province Complains*.

*Le Futur Pompiste's* recent inactivity ("People have moved, started families and careers," Jessika explains, although a new album may emerge in 2009) made it not only appealing but all too easy for the singer to collaborate with Henry, although, she hastens to add: "Mostly it was that me and Henry wanted to do something together, and something very different from the music of both *Cats* and *LFP*. He urged me to write songs."

*Aboa Sleeping*, *Burning Hearts' debut album*, might be greeted as a marriage of the best elements of both members' other bands, but this is truly a matter of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. Full of subtle detail and a uniformly warm sound, this is a dream of idealized pop: beautifully understated vocals, melodies as reassuring as a lover's embrace, and a tone of intimacy that could only come from collaboration that is fully simpatico. Listen to the heart-tugging chorus of "Iris," the stately lockstep interplay between vocal and rhythm-track on "A Peasant's Dream," or the fade-to-black melancholy of the title track, and hear that same indefinable, inexplicable musical alchemy that is their homeland's claim.

For fans of *Cats on Fire*, *Le Futur Pompiste*, *Broadcast*, *The Magnetic Fields*, *Stereolab*, *Brittle Stars*, *Camera Obscura*

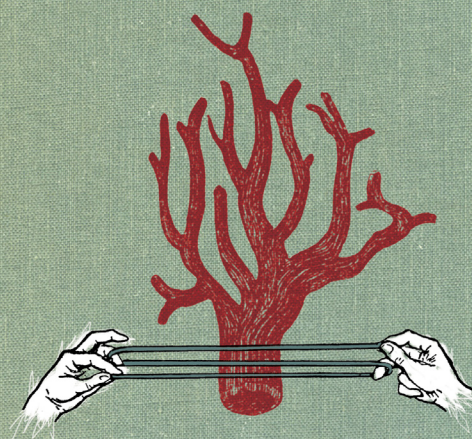
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### Praise for Burning Hearts

"Clever, creative and most important- really beautiful to listen to.... 2009 will be an impressive year of music if this album won't be among my top 5 this year."  
— Eardrums

"...we find ourselves with another favourite release for early 2009."  
— Milk Milk Lemonade

"...we can honestly say that this is some of the most beautifully fleeting, emotionally charged music we think we'll get for all of the 09... This is the stuff we think about when we talk about wanting to hear good pop music."  
— The Culture of Me



*Burning Hearts* ♦ *Aboa Sleeping*

### Compact Disc

1. I Lost My Color Vision
2. Iris
3. Various Lives
4. The Galloping Horse
5. We Walked Among the Trees
6. Sea Birds
7. A Peasant's Dream
8. Close to Her
9. Aboa Sleeping

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