

Swashbuckling Mr Cat & The Jackal unleash Sins and Siren Songs

Mr Cat & The Jackal are not gonna be everybody's beverage of choice but, if you like your drink strong and straight up with a twist of theatrical quirk, their new album *Sins and Siren Songs* should go down a treat. Since I received the album I have been drinking it down fairly rapidly and so far I'm loving it and happily hangover free.

 By [Ruth Cooper](#) 15 Mar 2011



It's not particularly often that one comes across a truly unique South African band these days and that quirk Mr Cat & The Jackal certainly seem to be filling a gap in the market. Originally assembled to perform for theatre productions, MCATJ have brought these dramatic, story-telling influences to their latest album. These nuances are beautifully illustrated in the design of their album which resembles an old school story book accompanied with beautiful etchings. Flip, this album can be bought for the album design alone; luck the music and lyrics it contains are just as interesting and unique.

The 16 tracks are a mix of sultry dark blues and plucky foot-stomping folk tunes that take you back to a time of swashbuckling pirates upon the high seas, lonesome travellers with murder on their minds, evil women with fire in their eyes and dusty taverns filled with sultry wenches and strong liquor - stirring stuff.

I'm pretty much loving all the tracks on this album but ones that I feel particularly amorous towards include *Bad man, he comin'*, a song that wouldn't sound amiss on a Tarantino soundtrack. It's so crazy, sexy, dangerous that you want to jump the nearest person at hand; it's gonna be a live crowd-pleaser for sure.

The Rain came pouring (The Flood, Pt 1) and *The Spawn of pirates (The Flood, Pt2)* are wonderful bee swinging, foot-stomping sing-along songs. The two tracks tell a (twisted) tale, loosely based on the biblical story of Noah's Ark, but in this rendition instead of finding dry land, the ark and all the animals are pillaged by a bunch of ruthless pirates.

Mother Tongue has eerily ominous lyrics hidden in a jaunty beat, hinting at an exceedingly worsening social dissonant and corrupt SA - getting some *Swart Gevaar* paranoia vibes with this one.

Succubus and its country-like meandering beats tell the tale of a seductress of the most evil kind. Building slowly this song slowly layers itself into a crescendo and then down again; loving Gertjie Besselsen vocals on this - strong and growly.

The following track *Dig* has something of an American slave song about it - soulful, mournful and wonderfully resonant.

The album ends with *Straight* - a jaunty little ditty with clever and metaphorical lyrics about well... living life in general - a perfect ending to a rich story book of an album that takes you on quite the dark and twisted journey.

Why not set sail and take a trip through time and space and catch those clever and supremely talented MCATJ boys at their album launch this Friday, 18 March at 7:30pm at the Free World Design Centre, 71 Waterkant Street.

www.mrcatandthejackal.com

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

Ruth is the production manager at Bizcommunity. ruth@bizcommunity.com
View my profile and articles...

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