



Children 18:3  
In Stores 2.26  
Tooth & Nail Records

The place: a farmhouse outside a tiny town of little consequence in rural Minnesota. The players: three siblings--two males, one female--with the given name of Hostetter, each possessing complimentary skill of extraordinary potential. The motive: to combat the stale, ordinary, and predictable nature of popular rock music wrought of the unimaginative. The result: an undeniable sound backed by an undeniably unique persona.

Three kids born and raised on a farm in Minnesota? Playing rock music? Writing amazing songs with thought-provoking ferocity? Destroying stages? Are you kidding?

No.

On the right side of the stage you see David, the eldest, lead vocalist, songwriter, and guitarist. Long black locks swirl around piecing eyes that bleed black mascara. Sleeveless, torn, jean-jacketed, a vision of a classic era, spirit of '77. On the left side of the stage sister Lee Marie swings her bass high above her platinum blonde maelstrom, supported by white high-heels. She screams with lipstick-laden vocal yelps and finger-points to the sky. And behind, brother Seth twirls his sticks and bashes in rhythm to complete the whirlwind that is...Children 18:3.

Then come the sounds, cutting your face like glass shrapnel. You hear classic song structure, guitar crunch, and fast driving beats. Just the right blend of melody and muscle, exchanged between the male and female voices onstage, to make this bit more universal than simple two-dimensional aggression. You hear songs, not just riffs with outfits. Rock songs you can grab a hold of, yet completely raw in presentation. And finally, the words are defiant, poetic, and

communal. Just the type of thing a starving musical climate needs:

A reminder of everything that was once right about punk and rock n' roll.

David Hostetter, the leader, is a man of few words. But to speak with him, one cannot possibly miss that words chosen carefully are words spoken most powerfully:

“We don't say much because we want the music and live show to do the talking for us. That way people can't judge us by anything else.”

Seth and Lee Marie nod in agreement.

The self-titled debut is an exercise in potency and accuracy. There are moments of helter-skelter instrumentation/vocal presentation--always compelling--making you want to hear each individual track over again, just to catch everything that is happening. Then, out of these hectic moments comes brilliant clarity in the form of huge choruses. David and Lee Marie feed off one another effectively, each having a distinct, separate sound so that the listener never has a reason to find either voice repetitive. Sometimes shouting, sometimes screaming with melody, sometimes harmonizing. Always compelling.

“We just want to approach everything from a song perspective,” states David. “There are so many bands out there that have other motivations, but we always try to do whatever it takes to compliment the song, rather than a scene, genre, look, or stereotype.”

Standout tracks are not easy to determine at first, as this is an full album of music, truly. “All My Balloons,” the smash opener, is a good representation of the faster numbers on the debut. Tight song structure, creative verse, ingenious hook, clever chorus lines, and an indelibly energetic delivery. Kids. Will. Sing. *All my balloons are popping...* “LCM” picks up where “Balloons” left off, with all the aforementioned elements in place, along with some great, repeated, gang-vocal shouts on the bridge will inspire broken furniture in homes and bruises at shows. Yet again, the band is not two dimensional in their songwriting approach. Tracks like “Mock The Music” are are a welcome--if only slight--departure. Less of a pit anthem and more of a dance numbers, it is representative of several songs which are somewhat lighthearted, possessing a more universal appeal. It is not difficult to imagine a diverse audience parading the U.S., following the 18:3 van from town to town just for sixty minutes of sweat, shouts and sing-alongs.

Though David is candid in referencing his spiritual passions when you ask, a subtle, poetic approach to lyric writing is what characterizes he and his band's

approach:

“I have tried forcing this and that in terms of lyrics in the past, but I have found that if I just let my heart speak I feel so much better about the song when it is finished. I just want whatever I write about to be genuine. Most of the time the subject matter somehow involves desperation...I guess I reside there because it is the opposite of complacency.”

Many times leaving a little room for the imagination makes the most powerful impact. These words exemplify this concept. On “Mock the Music,” David speaks of being an individual, and not allowing outside forces to dictate identity: *Blame me, but you're nothing impressive at all. I'm happy to smile. I'm happy to nod, if you're happy with making it up...And I've marked off my space in the room you can't cross. I wanted to be different, but he's always been the same. And I can't, no I can't try and win this for you. I won't do it.* On LCM he refers to never looking back on a decision made with confidence and integrity: *So who are you? Do you know what you want? What does all this mean? I know you have a yesterday but tomorrow is unseen. You have a choice...Last chance, Marie.* And the running theme of confronting complacency is no more apparent than on “All my Balloons”: *Oh so sucker for the sugar substitute and artificial flavoring. Small wonder I felt so safe inside nothing more than a smoke screen and masquerade...but outside a car bomb is ticking.*

Armed with nothing less than an all-or-nothing work ethic, the band plans to travel the world over to make known its undaunted determination. All they need is a tiny crack in the door of opportunity, and anyone in attendance at a show will see that, unlike most today, this band is of the that rare, authentic material. It will be interesting to watch them hunt down and annihilate sound systems, crowds, and stages, leaving bruised memories in their wake in the weeks to come. And radio waves beware--there are several legitimate singles in here, with songs like the aforementioned “Mock the Music” and “All My Balloons.” Yet despite all this potential for legitimate impact, the band sights an eternal measure for their goals. Children 18:3 believe that if inspiration comes from above, there is no limit to what can be accomplished.

“Christians look to the general market today to set the standard, but it should not be this way,” David explains. “There is a lot of creativity up in heaven, and we just have to ask for it. I believe the church is going to take over the arts again, and I think my responsibility as a Christian is become broken and to seek first the Kingdom of God and all other things including art will be added. As I draw closer to the Lord then I will be inspired to write things that I cannot possibly imagine, and inspire others along the way to do the same. If we have a goal, that is it.”

