

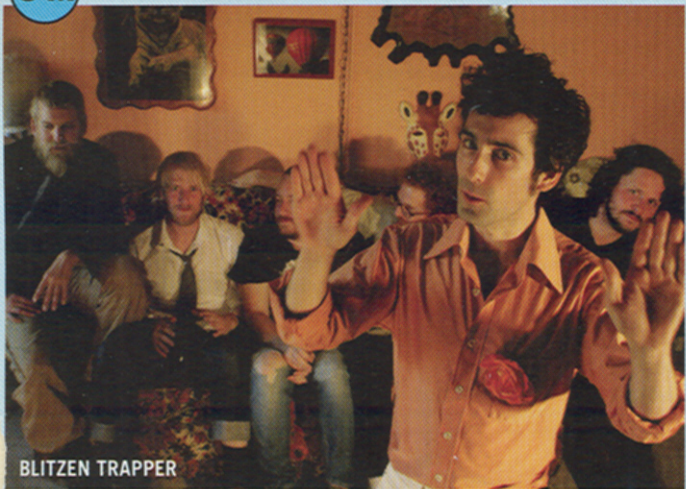
American ★ Songwriter

BLITZEN TRAPPER Furr (SUB POP) ★ ★ ★ ★

Much the same genre puddle-jumper that put Portland, Ore., sextet Blitzen Trapper on the map with the self-produced *Wild Mountain Nation* last year, their majors debut *Furr* is every bit a worthy follow-up. Taking a cue mid-album from Traveling Wilbury's "Tweeter & Monkey Man" for "Black River Killer" before dipping into the piano ballad "Not Your Lover," and capping it off with "Helter Skelter" clatter of "Love U," *Furr* is an avant-rock magpie that somehow congeals its seemingly at-odds derivations. When Jay Farrar seems racked for an original bend on the tired alt-country formula he helped birth, Blitzen Trapper easily revives it with "Stolen Shoes & A Rifle," and self-assuredly tap on Townes Van Zandt's shoulder with closer "Lady on the Water." That it's done entirely without the irony one might expect from a misfit band of Northwestern cowpunks is a welcome, if stunning, feat.—DUSTIN ALLEN



SEE TRACK #20 "FURR"



BLITZEN TRAPPER