

Grey Eyes by the Salteens

The Salteens: making perfect pop in an imperfect age

It's a testament to the better angels of global culture that a bunch of music geeks in Vancouver can grow up to make worldly, magisterial, boldly contoured pop together. And it's a testament to the better angels of The Salteens that, after a decade as a band and seven years after establishing indie label-of-love Boompa Records, they've crafted an album defined by both precision and heart.

Grey Eyes nods towards sophisticated '60s European and American pop constructionists (Gainsbourg, Bacharach, the other Scott Walker) and brass-tacks workmanlike hit-makers of yore (Tin Pan Alley, the Brill Building), while acknowledging transformative pop heirs from the '70s and '80s (Godley & Crème, The Smiths). Yet far from being a mash-up of influences, **Grey Eyes** captures the freshness that marked the dawn of popular music and periodically renews it – no matter what hurts and indignities pop songs are woven from, a transcending embrace of possibility remains a genre fundamental.

Salteens' songwriter Scott Walker had a lot of grief to give to **Grey Eyes**: the passing of his father, and witnessing his mother's struggle with Alzheimer's, leaving him on the threshold of assuming the terrifyingly adult roles of caretaker-of-memory and maker-of-the-future; navigating the dashed expectations and broken promises of grown-up life in this crazily uncertain era; and, most of all, committing the brave acts of love that can be as painful as they are redeeming... CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



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File Alongside: Hem, Belle & Sebastian, The Clientele, Fleet Foxes, The Heavy Blinkers, Grand Archives, classic pop and soul

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Nevertheless, the pop law holds: the lower the lows, the higher the highs. And so it is that **Grey Eyes** — polished, crisp, sprightly, and architecturally realized — is a sublime and energetic continuation of a catalogue launched with The Salteens' award-winning debut **Short-Term Memories** (endearing Records, 2000), deepened on their 2003 college radio chart-topper **Let Go of Your Bad Days** (*raison d'être* for Boompä) and this spring's tantalizingly silence-breaking EP **Moths**, and further developed over years of globetrotting tours and performances (did you catch them on *Yo Gabba Gabba?*).

The Salteens — some of them friends for decades, and almost all steeped in formal training, including Walker and his BA in Music — approached their long-awaited follow-up as a celebration of shared experience and technical mastery. Eschewing guitars to fashion **Grey Eyes** solely from stunning brass arrangements, gleaming choral melodies, and other deft orchestrations, the band has crafted an impeccably burnished album that disputes the silly notions that 'indie' equals 'ramshackle' and pop is inconsequential.

by Mary Christa O'Keefe

"Summer-perfect pop." - NATIONAL POST

"Canadian pop... that would do Karen Carpenter proud." - ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY



From left: Carrie Tennant, Carol Dymond, Dion Willis, Scott Walker, Kevin Cooper, Alison Gorman, Tim Sars, Alexander Cannon, Bryan Milks, Ellen Marple

Grey Eyes features:

Scott Walker VOCALS, MANDOLIN, PIANO

Carrie Tennant VOCALS, PIANO, CLARINET

Dion Willis DRUMS, VOCALS

Kevin Cooper DOUBLE BASS, ELECTRIC BASS, VOCALS

Robert Calder TRUMPET, BARITONE, FLUGELHORN

Alison Gorman TRUMPET, BARITONE, FLUGELHORN

Ellen Marple TROMBONE, TUBA

Bryan Milks TENOR SAX, CLARINET, BASS CLARINET

Tim Sars BARI SAX, FLUTE

Carol Dymond FLUTE

Todd Simko GUITARS ON 1, 8

PRODUCED BY TODD SIMKO & SCOTT WALKER. ALL SONGS BY SCOTT WALKER EXCEPT 'SAVINGS AND LOANS', WORDS BY CARRIE TENNANT, MUSIC BY SCOTT WALKER.

**boompä** *In stores October 12, 2010*
SALTEENS.COM - MYSPACE.COM/THEMOSALTEENS - @SALTEENS

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