

REVIEWS

DINOSAUR JR.

*I Bet on Sky*

[Jagjaguwar]

It sounds like a funny thing to say about a band whose catalog includes the songs “Puke + Cry” and “Pointless,” but Dinosaur Jr. has taken a moony romantic turn on recent albums. Sure, it’s an awkward, mumbling kind of romance, paired with churning bursts of guitar sludge, but the group’s latest is way more tender than the howling odes to alienation found on earlier albums. Instead of pushing people away, singer J Mascis beckons shyly over a mellow descending guitar riff on “Almost Fare,” does some soul-searching—paired with wah-wah guitar—on “I Know It Oh So Well,” and sounds like he’s yearning for something on “What Was That.” And is that piano on “Stick a Toe In?” Don’t think the band has gone soft, though. Mascis can still peel paint with guitar solos like the shrieking whirlwind that rips through the riff-heavy workout “Pierce the Morning Rain,” and bassist Lou Barlow sounds ready to come uncoiled on his terse contribution, “Recognition.” —Eric R. Danton

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