

## REVIEWS

## BAND OF HORSES

*Mirage Rock*

[Columbia]

Band of Horses wasted no time following up 2010's Grammy-nominated *Infinite Arms*, and on *Mirage Rock*, the intention to move forward is clear. The band focuses on ramshackle alt-country, seldom playing straight rock songs and occasionally forgoing the "alternative" altogether. After recording their first three albums with Phil Ek, the group recruited producer Glyn Johns. The slight country twang frontman Ben Bridwell has always exhibited is more pronounced, and it's now echoed in the guitars—particularly on the acoustic "Long Vows" and lead single "Knock Knock." But even if the group has embraced Americana in a big way, their lyrics center on the responsibilities of 30-somethings in the modern world—and the question of whether this modern world is hurtling toward destruction. Band of Horses haven't completely shifted away from their indie rock roots. They've honed in on their country heritage with affection rather than affectation. —Amanda Farah

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