



Bless These Sounds under the City  
review by: Becky Huskins

I must first cite here the definition of ethereal: extremely delicate and light in a way that seems too perfect for this world. That, in a nutshell, is probably about the best description I can give for the new record by Bless These Sounds Under the City, *On the Brink of Life*. I'll admit it. I was intrigued to listen to these guys because I really dug their name: Bless These Sounds Under the City. It sounded sweet and seemed to embody not just music but a musical ideal.

Albert Strawn, one half of this majestic duo tells me that the name was meant as "a shout-out to the voices of all the artists that exist and create in the city of Charlotte". He says it's a longer story than that, but I believe that simple idea tells us a lot. Strawn, singer and multi-instrumentalist has been playing alongside Derrick J. Hines also a singer and multi-instrumentalist for four years now with their unique brand of serene and lovely music that sounds like it was handpicked for the soundtrack of Jason Herring's local radio show, *Fizzy Pop Rivers*. And Jason's quick response to his opinion of Bless These Sounds was as simple as "I absolutely love them" and says he does feature them often on his Plaza-Midwood Community Radio show.

When I received my download of the new record, I went straight to "Salt in the Waves" and the title cut, "On the Brink of Life", because I wanted to hear the collaboration of Jude Salinas on flute and Charlie Wofford on cello. I was not let down by the sensational melodies these four artists drew out together. But my favorite track on the record is "Whatever You Become", and I feel certain the line "I'm not in love.....it's just a dream" just might go down as one of my favorite all-time musical lyrics ever.



Strawn and Hines note influences as wide and varied as Bob Dylan, Tom Waits, Grizzly Bear, Radiohead, Prince, Rufus Wainwright, St. Vincent and OutKast and definitely lives up to its description of indie/electronic/folk. They also have love for a lot of local bands like Sinners & Saints, Ancient Cities, Dollar Signs, Sam the Lion, and many others. Hines finds the time to play in emerging band Dinner Rabbits too.

You can listen to these guys for free on Reverb Nation and Spotify, but if you'd like to throw a little support behind their work consider purchasing the new record on Amazon, iTunes, or Band Camp. I can tell you they've already become a part of my inner soundtrack. Twinkly, beautiful, unique and that earlier fifty cent word I'm fond of: ethereal.