

Title:

Arcade Fire - Straight From Montreal

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507

Summary:

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Whether the Montreal scene went on to equal that of 1990's Seattle is debatable - in fact the "explosion" is still underway, and the full impact won't likely be known for years to come - but the importance of Arcade Fire to the Canadian Indie...

Keywords:

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Article Body:

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Whether the Montreal scene went on to equal that of 1990's Seattle is debatable - in fact the "explosion" is still underway, and the full impact won't likely be known for years to come - but the importance of Arcade Fire to the Canadian Indie scene is indisputable.

Once dismissed as a novelty act of sorts - they had a fondness for performing in unusual outfits including crash helmets, and often took to marching through their audiences - music junkies soon figured out that Arcade Fire was in fact, the real thing.

An eclectic and unusually large line-up is headed by lead vocalist Win Butler and his wife, Régine Chassagne, (Canadian born with Haitian roots). Butler's brother, William, is a multi-instrumentalist (bass, guitars, synthesisers and percussion), and Tim Kingsbury plays bass and guitars. Richard Reed Parry (frequently compared to Napoleon Dynamite) plays guitars, bass, keyboards and accordion, while Sarah Neufeld plays violin and Jeremy Gara sits on drums. Several additional travelling musicians mean the bands on-stage presence is

normally around ten, and the fact that so many play multiple instruments - well, you can imagine the potential for a chaotic stage performance!

Arcade Fire's 2004 debut CD, *Funeral*, was released with little fanfare. An album that combined the solemn (songs influenced by the deaths of several of the band's family members), with unusual instrumentation and pop masterpieces, like *Neighbourhood #3 (Power Out)*, *Funeral* caught the critics off-guard. The oversight wouldn't last long, however, and propelled by a raucous live show and endorsements from celebrity fans including David Bowie, U2 and Talking Heads' David Byrne, the hype surrounding the band began to build.

The infamous music review website Pitchfork awarded *Funeral* a 9.7 rating, and it was ultimately named Album Of The Year for 2004 by the music press, garnering a host magazine covers, television appearances and awards for the band.

There was a tremendous amount of pressure on the band to equal *Funeral*'s phenomenon with a follow-up release, even though there was little hope of matching the media hype that had accompanied Arcade Fire's "discovery" and the subsequent spotlight on the Montreal music scene.

Neon Bible was released in March, 2007, immediately holding down the number one position in the Canadian music charts and premiering at number two on the Billboard album chart. The *Neon Bible* tour continues this autumn throughout North America and Europe, so if you get the chance to see Arcade Fire, it's doubtful you'll regret it.

Besides being a phenomenal live act, you will witness the band that single-handedly kick started the Montreal Music scene. And who knows what famous performer might join them on stage?

To whet your appetite, here's another fine snippet of Arcade Fire concert footage, this time *Rebellion (Lies)* from the Coachella music festival.

Discography - Studio Albums

2004: *Funeral* (#33 UK)

2007: *Neon Bible* (#2 UK)