



# BLACK WHALES. ORIGINS EP. MT. FUJI RECORDS. 9.15.09

**Black Whales (black \* whAYles), n. :** Flowers on drugs, warm-hearted spaghetti-westerns, reverb-soaked, tubey riffs in the hay amidst an organized chaos of booming and danceable rhythms, honey-sticky melodics, jangly guitar hooks, tambourines, shaker magic.

*Origins*, the debut EP from Seattle, WA's Black Whales will get you good. It will hit all of your sweet spots, it will surprise you with its seemingly effortless, effortlessly seamless songwriting. It will cause you, while in the middle of going through your pile of releases, to excitedly remember that brilliant bands that are just at the start of undoubtedly great journeys are indeed sometimes in said pile (this will happen because Black Whales is such a band).

The quintet officially formed in early 2008. With limited dough and loose song ideas, Black Whales entered Soundhouse Recording and Chroma Sound studios with producer Zack Reinig in early 2008 to record together for the first time, and the resulting fire, drive and intuitively addictive nature of their *Origins* EP both solidified each members' commitment to and excitement about the band. Before, Black Whales were a good idea; a great project—after leaving the studio, Black Whales were a unit. A team. A Band with a capital B.

Thus, *Origins'* thematic content is twofold: obviously, it's the band's recorded starting point. More importantly, however, it's each member shaking off the past and everything that goes with it. As lead vocalist/guitarist Alex Robert explains, "No memories, no regrets, no heartbreak, no blood. The album is meant to sound wide-eyed and optimistic but with lots of ghosts and memories still hanging around. I guess that's as close as it gets to thematic."

Indeed, on the title track (which starts with a bright, mellow guitar line that is then built upon with echoey toms that are then built upon with more deeply reverbed guitars that sound like they were recorded in a tank across the room), Black Whales' refrain is "I don't owe you anything./I don't owe you anything." They're not being dismissive, just honest, confident, explanatory.

There's so much darkness in their pop, and there's so much brightness in their shade. Black Whales are far from being one-dimensional; they've done what, if one is honest with oneself, only happens rarely: they've found perfect matches and musical

foils with each other. They've found an incredibly textural, experimentally off-center, perfectly heart-hitting way of bringing their amazing songs to fruition. Again, quoting Robert: "I think this record shows what kind of music we would have wanted to listen to, before recording it...if that makes sense." It does.

Black Whales are a force recorded. Black Whales are a force live. Black Whales is the kind of band, and *Origins* the kind of EP, that will reward you for caring about music...and they're just getting started.

## **BLACK WHALES IS:**

Alex Robert: vox/guitar  
Alan Foote: guitar/keys  
Davey Brozowski: drums/percussion  
Ryan Middleton: bass  
Mike Bayer: percussion/keys

**RECORD CREDITS:** All songs on "Origins" were recorded, mixed and produced by Zack Reinig at Soundhouse Recording and Chroma Sound in Seattle, WA during February and August of 2008, except "Young Blood", which was recorded and mixed at Chasing Rabbits by Paulo Pugliese and Black Whales in February of 2009.

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**LAZY BUT APT COMPARISONS:** Jonathan Fire Eater, Band of Horses, the vibe of the late, great 13<sup>th</sup> Floor Elevators.