



L'Point

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Drum kit: Tom Pinton
Guitar 1: Dan Satar
Bass guitar: Dada
Vocal: Jan Kjecar
Guitar 1 *1: Tom Satar

L'Point Biography

L'Point, the indie-rock minimalists from Prague, left port heading towards new horizons with their 2001 debut "Aquila Bert" on Silver Rocket/Minority Records (SRR14/MIN11). They surprised themselves with the intensity yet dreaminess of their contribution to the ongoing history of punk rock. Members hail from such signature Czech bands as Tom is My Sugar, Naquei Manou, Interrogation Point and Toxicka Psychoza. With these deverse elements combined L'Point has found itself on a similar path as groundbreaking bands from 4AD and Dischord. Though inspired by 90's sounds L'Point is not engaging on a sentimental journey but rather cutting a new swath with an extraordinary balance between English fragility and American intensity.

L'Point has passed many milestones in the last two years. A split single with Day After recording artists Anyway released on Silver Rocket and recorded by Ondrej Jezek of OTK found Rock and Pop magazine nominating them for best new artist for 2000. L'Point decided to continue recording with Ondej Jezek who has worked with the influential Jonathan Burnside (Melvins, Nirvana, Consolidated, Depeche Mode). L'Point and Jezek teamed up with American producer Kip Beelman (Unwound, Built to Spill, Sleater-Kinney) to produce the emphatic sound of the full length debut "Aquila Bert". In support of the new release L'Point has played the Czech Republic's two biggest outdoor festivals Rock for People and Trutnov Open Air as well as touring Austria, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary. The single "Kriegswichtig" has recieved play on the legendary John Peel Show on BBC. L'Point has supported such acts as A Drastic Measure, Chokebore (Punk in My Vitamins), Juno (De Soto), and Pleasure Forever (Sub Pop).

The band is currently working on material for their next full length release with new member Dada formerly of Ember and Lvmen.

Discography:

"Sherudo Garo" 7"EP (Silver Rocket) 1998
"Martians" on Garbage From The Space comp. cassette (Silver Rocket) 1998
"Candy Corn" on Ten Years Ego comp. CD (Noiseworks) 1999
"Yellow Hut/Forlorn" on split 7"EP w/ Anyway (Silver Rocket) 2000
"Aquila Bert" CD/LP (Minority Records / Silver Rocket) 2001
"Lifter" on My Time Is Over comp. CD (Samuel Records) 2001
"Kriegswichtig" on Hallo 13 comp. CD (Noiseworks) 2002

REVIEWS

POINT "Aquila Bert" CD

"Minority Records has taught us three things about bands from the Czech Republic: 1. They're not very good at coming up with names (see also Waawe and C). 2. Other than a faint hint of an Eastern European accent, they sound like American bands. 3. They make astonishingly good music. I liked Aquila Bert immediately, but I didn't entirely trust my response. Was I giving Point extra "credit" for their heritage? Would I have looked twice at Aquila Bert if it had come from Peoria instead of Prague? It's a tough call. In the end, it comes down to effort. I haven't heard many American bands as fervent and as frenzied as Point, and this underlying urgency adds freshness and sincerity to their music. Lovers of thick, crunchy guitar riffs will be happy; Aquila Bert is packed with robust six-string action. "Yellow Hut" offers a lovingly layered melody, while "Bibione" instills the standard slow/fast quiet/loud dynamic with heavy, abrasive chords that threaten to swamp the vocals. "Kriegswichtig" is a catchy pop song, utilizing a heavily-effected bass to give its chorus some heft. In "G R S+", the vocalist's unusually strong accent makes him sound like The Fall's Mark E. Smith, lending an oddly punkish slant to the song's constantly shifting tempo. "Herr Soul" and the anthemic "12" offer angular, abrasive highs -- "12" might even please Shellac fans -- and "Davebomber" builds from a spare, discordant melody to a thundering rhythmic juggernaut. However, Point's urgency also leads them head-first into pitfalls. Warbling keyboards and double-tracked vocals can't save "Piticko" from its bland, My First Emo Song riffs; despite some inventive stuff around the edges, the song is dull. Likewise, while most Eastern European guys probably have a better line on angst and depression than their Stateside counterparts, when the vocalist slips into raw-throated screaming mode, it's strangely disappointing. From this inventive band, you expect better. Fortunately, that's almost always what you get. Stateside listeners will be pleased by the presence of studio stalwart Kip Beelman (Unwound, Juno), who mixed the album and undoubtedly provided a little second-tier quality control. As Minority gains a foothold in the US, American bands should take care; as Point and their labelmates have demonstrated, not everything made in Eastern Europe is cheap and crappy. Though Aquila Bert is probably the weakest of the Minority releases I've heard, it definitely deserves a larger audience. It might have been made in Prague, but trust me, it'll play in Peoria."

Splendid (www.splendidezine.com)

"As college students around the country head back to campus, the usual crop of "college"/alternative bands will be there to greet them. In that sea of angst and anomie, there is Point, serving up their offering Aquila Bert. Point sounds like Blink 182, Sum 41, Alien Ant Farm, ... the list continues. The only difference being, Point is not as pop-ish. Each track ripe with distortion and mumbled vocals. For those of us who have been on top of the alt/college scene, it is reassuring to see that the music has not changed. The only thing that's changed is now this kind of music is considered to be punk. Actually, it's more like punk-lite. This one is for music fans that can remember or care to look back upon days when music was somewhere between hair and grunge. Back in the days when alternative didn't mean alternapop. People, this is for you. So, crank it up! If you feel the need, get up and thrash around. Just remember, if you whip your head around too fast, it hurts."

Privy Magazine (www.privymagazine.com)

"POINT est un groupe tcheque dont les relents musicaux se situeraient quelque part entre du rock a la UNWOUND (les anciens... et surtout pas du meme tonneau que leur décevant dernier double album...) et une bonne grosse louchée de SONIC YOUTH sans expérimentations... (Oui je sais, vous allez me dire que l'espace n'est pas large entre ces deux la !!!) : L'ambiance reste tres pop rock, les mélodies presque familiares pour tous ceux qui ont déjà sniffé du SONIC YOUTH... un album qui s'écoute entre amis, au calme, a l'heure de l'apéro, au soleil et en short... Le disque ne fera pas chavirer les coeurs d'un coup d'un seul... c'est juste un album pop sympathique et loin d'etre essentiel ! Pour remarquer, ils ont déjà fait les premieres parties de JUNO et CHOKEBORE..."

STNT (www.stnt.org)

"Some bands can really fool you. Just listening to the first track of their album, or even the first few bars of a song, can give you a totally askew impression of their sound. For instance, listening to "Girls and Boys," the first track off of Blur's Parklife, you might get the impression they were some sort of poppy Pet Shop Boys impersonation. In a similar bit of misunderstanding, the first few bars of Point's "Yellow Hut" brought to mind the swirling guitar layers of space-rock. Indeed, the strummed, reverberated, lush chords that open up the first track recall My Bloody Valentine more than the post-punk guitar rock of Sonic Youth, the style into which this band eventually falls. A quintet of veterans from the Prague music scene, Point have released their debut album, Aquila Bert, as a joint venture between a couple of European labels, Silver Rocket and Minority Records. As mentioned before, they play a style of post punk not totally dissimilar to the anguished guitar burn of Sonic Youth, and occasionally letting their guitar launch into the realm of space-rock. Indeed, Point's most effective songs come when they let their guitars seethe through the mix, playing around each other like a couple of squeamish children. "G R S +" and "Yellow Hut" excellent examples of the chiming, mounting, guitar thrust this band can build up. The band, however, is primarily song-based, for they never let their guitar indulgences slip into the long, droning instrumentals so prevalent in space-rock. Rather, they keep vocalist Jan Kjecar constantly employed - his vocals always return before the guitars can spin out of control. All things considered, Kjecar has a pretty decent indie rock voice. Far more melodic than the shouting style of Ian Mackaye, his voice crafts melodies that are sharp and biting but rarely stick in your head. He has a rasp in his voice that blends nicely with the guitar squall behind him, but never does he lose control and begin to scream. If you've read all that and are still sort of wondering what the hell Point sounds like, you've probably got a case. I've sort of been dodging the question, simply because I don't quite know how to describe this band's sound. They're pretty typical indie writers - they focus primarily on the guitars. There songs are often angular without being overly abrasive. Sometimes they assume the aggressive stomp of Fugazi, sometimes they have the low-key charm of Pavement, and other times they lapse into fuzzy guitar interplay a la Sonic Youth. They sound unique without being original. If Point is any indication of the kind of band Prague can produce, then there could be some awfully talented bands hiding there. And it's not that Point aren't talented, it's just that they sound a bit average. Don't let them fool you."

Delusions of Adequacy (www.adequacy.net)

"From the way the words read across the spine, I at first thought that the band was called Aquila Bert, and the album was titled "Point". Turns out it's the other way around, unfortunately. I think Aquila Bert would be a cool name for a band. Point seems like a pretty boring, predictable name for a band. Oh well, I guess this is all beside the point, really. The band is from Prague, and don't exactly have the best grasp of the English language. I've inferred this from some of the more inane lyrics I could make out clearly, i.e. "this place I cannot forget / smells like strawberries". Depending on how you look at it, this could either be charming or positively irritating. The band's grasp of American "indie" rock, however, is uncanny. They're actually better at it than most of their genuinely American counterparts, but that's really not saying all that much. This is slick, glossy medio-core, with a "European twist". I really should stop reading bands' promotional sheets entirely, or at least until well after I'm done writing their reviews. Because more often than not, promo sheets (especially the ones with black-and-white photographs of the band members looking oh-so-chic) do little more than make the band look ridiculous. Please, everyone, give these guys the overrating adulation they so desperately crave; I've got better things to do."

Lost At Sea (www.lostatsea.net)

POINT / ANYWAY split 7"EP (Silver Rocket)

"...Point is also quite good. They have more of an indie punk approach to their music. Point has these somewhat spacey vocals over mid to high tempo songs. They too have a bit of a DC feel to them as well but more of a straight forward rock approach. This two song each split is really rad and worth tracking down."

Punk Planet # 40 (www.punkplanet.com)