

The List

by Matt Driscoll

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Every week I have the pleasure of selecting one of the CDs we receive here at Weekly Volcano World Headquarters — sent to us by bands near and far — then digesting it and pumping out a review for all to read. It's a lot better than what I did on Thursdays prior to the start of Thursday Album Reviews — which involved fetching Bobble Tiki's weekend stockpile of boxed wine and removing stains from the blouses of Steph DeRosa.

(To find out how to get your band's CD into our prestigious pile, click [here](#).)

This week, the lucky winner is San Francisco's The May Fire — who sent with care their soon to be released EP, *The List*, not just to the Weekly Volcano offices but to my ACTUAL HOUSE.

That's a little creepy, but it also shows conviction. Since *The List* happens to be a stand up effort — not to mention short and sweet — that conviction was enough to earn the May Fire a little internet ink.

In dog years, the May Fire is closing in on 30. This explains some things. A band that, according to their own promotional material, “grabs you by the scruff of the neck,” the May Fire — at least with *The List* — has achieved something rare in the world of raw garage rock. *The List* is both frenzied and rough around the edges — the way garage rock should be- but its six songs also combine flares of catchy and sweet pop tendencies not to mention shimmers of '70s disco/rock goodness. The result shows surprising maturity, and is something hard to ignore.

Case in point, usually while I write these reviews I listen to the record simultaneously. This, for some reason, has proven impossible with *The List*. The May Fire — be it the Blondie moments, the fuzzed out guitars, the new wave basslines, or the punk charisma of frontwoman Catty Tasso (or more likely a combination of all the above) — leaves me totally unable to multitask. It's as though the May Fire won't allow me to concentrate on anything but their Bay Area bred chops. And the fact that I'm not fighting it would seem to indicate they're on to something.

The List is the last of a trilogy of self released EPs the May Fire have put out over the last 12 months. About this time last year, *Plastic Army* dropped, followed closely by *La Victoria*. On Aug. 8, when *The List* is officially laid upon the lap of the world, the May Fire will have achieved their goal.

The List is quite a finish.

The EP opens with a single guitar and the lone voice of Tasso — whose Chilean roots only help to accentuate her already sexy role as centerpiece of a dirt-under-the-fingernails garage rock band. But it's not long before Tasso, along with the rest of the May Fire, kick it up a notch. The track is called “Burning Up,” after all, and the May Fire don't disappoint. The mixture of tattered punk and sheik disco enhanced rock offers you a preview of what *The List* holds in store. It's the kind of song that would have been good for open road, middle of the night driving in 1978. It's even better for it in 2008.

Other highlights on this six song effort include the piano kick-started “Red Unicorn” — which proves Tasso is more than a pretty voice and has the song writing skills to match any of her physical beauty and attention grabbing presence; and the EP's last track “Mother/Father” — which is as catchy as it is urgent, and has an eerie vibe of a band being pumped through an apartment call box in San Francisco's Tenderloin. If that doesn't sound intriguing, let me be the first to tell you- it most certainly is.

In all: short, sweet, garage rock with a disco edge. The May Fire and *The List* have put the proof of their skill on record. Repeatedly. Now people just need to start to take note.

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