

## **Saintseneca, *Such Things***

At the intriguing intersection of metaphysics and rock and roll, you will find the new Saintseneca album *Such Things*. While the thematic concerns of the record address the very nature of human consciousness, the decidedly hook-centric sound serves as a delightfully visceral counterpoint, infusing the band's unique melding of folk, punk and epic rock with a very earthly sense of groove. At its core, *Such Things* is entirely accessible and undeniably powerful, unquestionably Saintseneca's most cohesive, catchy output, and a work that cements the band's singer songwriter Zac Little's status as one of modern indie music's most thoughtful and talented artists.

"The songs still have surprises and textures, but I also hope people rock out to it a bit," Little explains. "I wanted it to sound like a band, that people were really playing this record. To make the sound more accessible inverse to the esoteric themes of the lyrics."

Bolstering the more streamlined "pop" compositions is a raucous and fuzzed out sonic palette that beautifully accentuates the record's power of engagement. "When we were getting ready to record with Mike (Mogis of Bright Eyes), I told him I wanted the songs to be filtered through sixties psychedelic pop," Little explains. "Not like a throwback record, because I didn't write those type of songs. What we wanted were modern songs that sounded like a band had gone back in time to record them."

The record begins with the exuberant proto-punk pop of "Such Things" complete with distorted yet melodic guitars and raucous sing alongs. "The song was originally more conventionally Saintseneca but then I decided to make it a two minute rock song," Little explains. "I changed it to this wide open strumming pattern that was really fuzzed out. I was pushing myself to try to explore the pop motif further, to try to use and bend that formula of having a groove, a beat, locking in and using that as scaffolding to build a song."

On songs like "The River" and "Bad Ideas" one can hear the band wholeheartedly embracing a powerful simplicity to brilliant effect. "We were kind of on a Creedence Clearwater Revival kick," Little says. "And I was just blown away by how lyrical their guitars are. I don't usually love guitar solos, but I really really like riffs. And they would have just five or six notes that would create a memorable sound. On songs like 'The River,' I think the riff became the defining element."

Since its origin in 2007 as an teenage bluegrass outfit in Appalachian Ohio, then its growth to a large, multi-instrumental live rock and folk collective whose onstage experiments would find their way to tape on 2011's *Last*, and then the more traditional approach of writing and recording in making *Dark Arc*, Saintseneca has largely been Little's machine. A meticulous, tireless craftsman, he began writing for *Such Things* by demoing songs composed of anywhere from two to one-hundred-and-fifty tracks, which he then shared with his bandmates to serve as reference points for their own invented parts.

"Even though it might seem like this singular vision, at the core my creative strategy for the band is one that inherently involves other people. I think the best work I'll make involves working that way. Ultimately, by involving other people that are really talented and that I admire, we'll come up with something that will transcend what any individual would be capable of. To me that's the ultimate creative goal; to have that element of spontaneity and the culmination of multiple minds."

Those disparate pieces and parts have come together succinctly to form a solid rock object called Such Things. You can hold it in your hands and hear it in your head: a culmination of tiny, beautiful moments and fluctuations of energy and information, compressed and etched into an LP sleeve and eternity.

"It's definitely a new way of songs manifesting, and it feels like a step forward," he says. "I'm gonna push myself and try this thing I've wanted to try. I think it's the best thing we've done so far, but then again I won't write a song that I don't think isn't the best thing I've done. When I finish it I have to feel like it's the best thing I've made. And if I don't feel that way, it's like, why bother?"