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Discourse Review

Pinback

Autumn Of The Seraphs (Touch And Go)

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The San Diego indie scene of the '90s

was known - to the

extent that it was

known at all - for

spitting out one

preposterously

spastic and complex

math-rock band

after another until

you could barely

keep track of them anymore. Of course, you hardly needed to keep track of them - in blind listening tests, nine out of 10 hipsters couldn't tell Heavy Vegetable from Truman's Water anyway. So it's a minor irony that what little still remains of that scene is concentrated in the sober and reflective music of Black Heart Procession and Pinback, the latter of which concerns us here.

While Black Heart anticipated the sleepy, undynamic turn much indie music would take in recent years, Pinback has grown up and retained the musical tension and dynamics that made its earlier bands, Three Mile Pilot and the aforementioned Heavy Vegetable, such intriguing finds. "From Nothing to Nowhere," the lead-off track to Autumn of the Seraphs, the band's fourth and best album, makes this immediately clear, effortlessly tense and laid-back simultaneously, like a Laurel Canyon-esque retroversion of Sonic Youth. The album never loses steam, giving the likes of Midlake and Raising the Fawn a serious run for their money with impressive songs like "Barnes," "Blue Harvest" and "Subbing for Eden." If it's not still too early to call, Autumn of the Seraphs is handily one of the year's best albums.