

THE FLYING TOURBILLON ORCHESTRA

Escapements EP
self-released

With a name straight out of the Elephant 6 categorical taxonomy (adjective from column A, obscure noun from column B, collective noun from column C), you could be forgiven for thinking that the Flying Tourbillon Orchestra traffics in the same kind of whimsical carnival psychedelia of some of that collective's less substantial artists. But on *Escapements*, the group's all-too-brief debut EP, the influences are far more grounded. Sounding like a particularly West Coast version of Scottish popsters Belle and Sebastian and Camera Obscura, the Flying Tourbillon Orchestra takes those band's breathy pop and adds a little weight to it. Maintaining the Scots' predilection for orchestral touches (listen to the pizzicato-plucked strings on the aptly titled "Strings" which also features a lovely Joe Meek-ish organ accent) and adding the occasional cinematic touch (the dramatic marching tempo and the haunting female hooting that pops up occasionally on "In a Dream"), the band is confident enough in its pop songwriting to never allow any of these exotic elements to pressure the music toward novelty. Like the best modern pop groups, the Flying Tourbillon Orchestra manages to recall many elements of the past fifty years of development without ever sounding like a direct copy of anyone else.

—Patrick Newsom