

THE CIRCUS IN FLAMES

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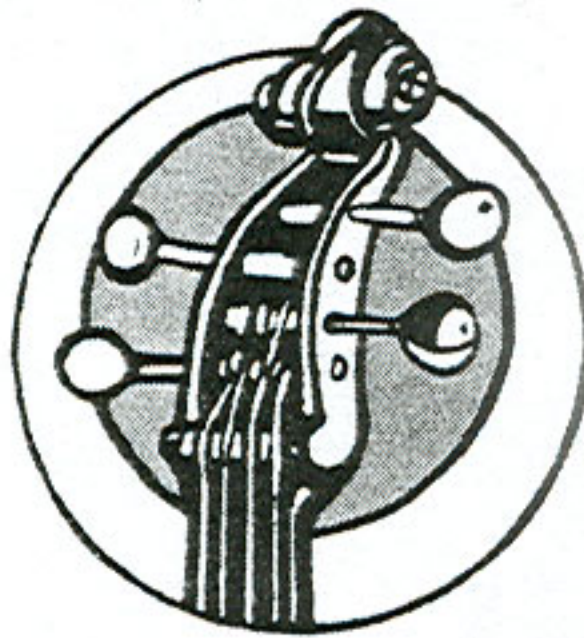
The Circus in Flames CIFD 001 (1997)

A strong argument for indie release of the year, at least in these parts, may be The Circus in Flames' debut. The sextet could be best described as Hank Williams Sr. meets Tom Waits meets Jimmy Rodgers at an impromptu jam during the recording of *The Basement Tapes*.

Led by Doug Andrew, whose tales revolve around common folks, mill workers, flyer delivery boys and beer-slingers, The Circus in Flames come across as a liquored-up group of players who cross paths at a party and decide to set the wheels on fire.

Any expectation of stellar playing would draw the wrong conclusion. The album is based on the simple joy of playing music for the sake of the music, promotion departments be damned. Consisting of acoustic guitar, mandolin, accordion, banjo, bass and drums, the band is a refreshing change from mega-budget recordings and proves that character can be a far better investment than mere dollars and cents.

— Pieter Hofmann



Dirty Linen

ISSUE #73

DEC '97/JAN '98