

Fade, by Yo La Tengo

reviewed by [Steve Thorngate](#) in the [May 15, 2013](#) issue

In Review



Fade

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Matador

Many bands have combined minimalist composition with maximalist guitar noise. Yo La Tengo does this best, carrying on without so much as a chord change while guitarist Ira Kaplan screeches and wails away. But the trio also stands out because

this is far from its only trick. YLT brings an encyclopedia of influences and a knack for moody, tasteful arranging. And Kaplan and drummer Georgia Hubley, a married couple, write songs about love and intimacy but sing them with a hushed, deadpan delivery that's rarely sentimental.

The band is quieter and less eclectic than it once was, but the writing and arranging keep getting better. With *Fade*, YLT—now working with producer John McEntire—sounds tighter, brighter and groovier. Yet the ingredients are familiar: a few fairly static parts, brought together so inventively that it all sounds more complexly layered than it is. From the relentless beat of “Ohm” to the earnest folk of “I’ll Be Around,” this is music both adventurous and repetitive, with every note in its exciting place.