

The House of Love
The House of Love
(PolyGram Records)

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by Ed Wottil

Though less consistently good than their debut LP (which also happened to be titled *The House of Love*), *The House of Love* (the new one) offers plenty of their somber, dramatic guitar pop. Shades of Echo and The Bunnymen and an increasingly evident debt to The Velvet Underground abound. But The House of Love have their own commanding melodic presence and can convey, at their best, an evocative mixture of cynicism, vulnerability and a kind of restless hope.

"Hanah" opens the album with a quietly chilling, near-psychedelic edge, and the searchingly metamorphic "Se Dest," a kind of visionary blues wherein guitars and tempos flicker and evolve like emotions in a lovers' fight, closes it with an ultimately resolute calm.

Along the way, the haunting, compulsive "I Don't Know Why I Love