

## Califone Bio

In an underground music landscape where 140 characters equals "journalism" and lone MP3s propel bands to momentary internet stardom, bands are here today and gone tomorrow.

Califone is a band that defies this blueprint. Their albums are full of layers and textures, offering endless depth, entire universes to lose yourself in - and beyond the thick spectrum of sound, they do something even more important: They write great songs. Califone is a band that will stand the test of time.

The band is at the peak of its powers on *All My Friends Are Funeral Singers*, its sixth song based album. The long-awaited follow-up to 2006's acclaimed *Roots and Crowns*, the album is the strongest collection of songs in a career with no shortage of strength. The subtlety and detail of Califone's previous work is present here - the atmospheres are carefully nuanced, the percussion is both rattling and melodic, the melodies are rich and soulful, interspersed throughout softly strummed folk and electrified blues. *All My Friends Are Funeral Singers* is a dense collage of sounds, expertly formed into fully realized pop songs.

*Roots and Crowns* brought a newfound immediacy in Califone, most notably on their cover of Psychic TV's "The Orchids." They had never recorded a song that would function as an obvious single before this, and the results were spectacular. *All My Friends Are Funeral Singers* expands upon these explorations - the hook on "Funeral Singers" is urgent and undeniable; the melody in "Polish Girls" is pop perfection. "Buñuel" is as epic as it is catchy, while "Evidence" and "Krill" are both absolute studies in beauty.

This pop exploration runs through the album, but it's not at the expense of Califone's vast musical vocabulary. The band's multi-instrumentalists (Joe Adamik, Jim Becker, Ben Massarella, Tim Rutili) and several notable guests utilize an orchestra's worth of instruments on the album, from the more typical (guitar, bass, piano), to the unusual (optigan, prepared piano, stylophone). Throw in more strings (fiddle, mandolin, banjo, baritone ukulele, cello), percussion (mbira, marimba, steel drum, thumb piano), some horns (bass clarinet, clarinet, French horn) and a whole mess of other oddities (ring modulators, loops, "effects," synth bass, electronics) and the careful

production and mixing of longtime collaborator Brian Deck, and you've got the perfect ingredients for Califone's finest and most ambitious album to date.

Califone's music has often been described as cinematic, and the band has been known to contribute live improvised soundtracks to silent films. Many of these performances have been released on Califone albums *Deceleration One* and *Deceleration Two*. Primary songwriter and vocalist Tim Rutili's artistic endeavors stretch beyond music, and include the creation of surreal short documentaries, music videos and experimental films.

From the same font of inspiration--and on the same theme--as the songs on *All My Friends Are Funeral Singers* comes Rutili's first feature-length film. Also titled *All My Friends Are Funeral Singers*. The screenplay for the film and many of the songs were written at the same time and incorporate many of the same images and characters. The movie was shot in an old, rickety house in Indiana in the spring of 2009 and stars the respected cult actress Angela Bettis (*Girl, Interrupted*, *May*, *Carrie*). The band will be performing a live, interactive soundtrack to the movie for many of their performances supporting the album, adding a new element to the band's live show. It will be a truly special and ambitious event, and unlike anything Califone has done to date. A stand alone edit of the movie will be submitted to film festivals come 2010.

*All My Friends Are Funeral Singers* is the record that the great *Roots* and *Crowns* hinted at. The songwriting is fleshed out, the musical vision is boiling over, the sonic experimentation is indulgent and dense, yet there's a great cohesion, a sense of purpose and a newfound focus to this Califone effort. Never has the band felt so vibrant, so alive, on one of their albums. *All My Friends Are Funeral Singers* is built for the long haul. Make space on your record shelf, because this one is here to stay.