

# The Ponys

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As year 2000 drew to a close, singer/guitarist Jered Gummere and bassist Melissa Elias decided it was time. They recruited drummer Nathan Jerde and THE PONYS started playing around Chicago, eventually recording two singles in 2002. These found their way into the hands of In The Red's Larry Hardy, who signed the band, prompting them to add Ian Adams on keyboards and guitar, so as to better duplicate their layered recorded sound live.

THE PONYS' debut LP, *Laced With Romance*, was recorded with Jim Diamond in Detroit and released in February 2004 to great acclaim, NME calling it "a dirty-sounding mess of post-punk choppiness, ear-searing Farfisa organ and timeless teenage snarling."

After months of constant touring, they slipped into Chicago's Electrical Studios with Steve Albini for *Celebration Castle*, released in May 2005. Even more varied than their debut, *Celebration Castle* seemed to accentuate the band's physical power and precise dynamics. Rolling Stone said, "While other indie bands fuss themselves into a lather straining to redefine the templates of 'garage rock' or 'post-punk,' The Ponys just get it the hell done."

Just before the release of *Celebration Castle*, however, Ian decided that touring life was not for him, and he was replaced by guitarist and local charmer Brian Case. His addition reinvigorated the band and led them toward a more ballsy sound; indeed, some of the artier forays that Ian brought to past records have been replaced on *Turn The Lights Out* by pure sonic density.

Matador finally got their hands on THE PONYS and, dragging them off the road for a while, got them in Electrical Studios and Brooklyn's Headgear Studios in September 2006 with John Agnello ([www.johnagnello.com](http://www.johnagnello.com)) to record *Turn The Lights Out*. With their most brilliant batch of songs to date, plus the luxury of being able to take their time in the studio, THE PONYS turned in an ambitious, but wholly addictive, record. Sexy and exuberant, this is a sound which references so many of the great twin-guitar bands of the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s, but resists definition.