

# BRANDTSON

## Send Us A Signal (The Militia Group)

**JARED JOLLEY-DRUMS/VOCALS**

**MYK PORTER-GUITAR/VOCALS**

**MATT TRAXLER-GUITAR**

**JOHN SAYRE-BASS**

Ushering in yet another force of credibility to The Militia Group roster in 2004 is Cleveland's BRANDTSON, the prized indie rock act who've not only spent the past seven years in the underground rock scene generating a healthy, lauded discography, sizable fan base and landing prominent tours with notable artists, but who've also hustled those years breaking ground for artists in the genre today.

Though the signing is a recent one, the alliance with BRANDTSON dates back several years prior, with the foursome working closely with label owners Chad Pearson and Rory Felton, well before The Militia Group label even existed.

BRANDTSON spent most of their prolific career on renown indie label Deep Elm, releasing six discs in total (including their Letterbox launch in 1998 and a split with seminal artists Camber and Seven Storey Mountain in 2002) and generating rave reviews from a vast array of publications, including CMJ and Kerrang!. Mind you, success never came easy for BRANDTSON. The underdog indie rock band often found themselves burning endless miles of pavement, traversing the country entrenched in the epitome of the do-it-yourself ethic, all the while recording under strict budgets and pressing time constraints.

Yet, the immense effort and steadfast determination paid off with every release and live show, most particularly in the sheer amount of respect and praise the act had garnered from fans, the music press and fellow artists.

Once their term on Deep Elm was up, Traxler said The Militia Group became a viable option for a new home. "We'd heard a whole lot of good stuff about what they were doing with their bands and started seeing their ads everywhere," Traxler says. "It seemed like they had their stuff together, so we talked to them and they were really willing to help us out."

The years had taken its toll on BRANDTSON's van and equipment and the label instantly lent a hand. The act also requested a decent recording budget and The Militia Group come through, connecting the band for a fourth time with studio veteran Ed Rose in January 2004.

"I think a big factor in working with Ed is that we're comfortable with him," Traxler says. "We had done our last three records with him and I feel like it's a good marriage. At the same time, he's also been really supportive and helpful to us, and has offered a lot to the band, so I felt this was finally our chance to get in there to make the record that we wanted to make. He did the job of producer and he did it well."

The resulting album is *Send Us A Signal*, a dozen tracks of power-pop melody-laden rock gems. Firing off with the lead track, "Who Are You Now?" *Send Us A Signal* launches right into the thick of the band's trademark melodic phrasings, paired with thick guitars and driving drums, not unlike that of the Foo Fighters or Jimmy Eat World.

The renewed vigor of BRANDTSON carries throughout the rest of *Send Us A Signal* — "Throwing Rocks Tonight" finds the band see-sawing between simplistic, minimal, bass-driven verses and moving, densely-textured guitars, augmented by the immaculately-positioned deleted beat. The manic nature of "C'Mon Fascista" delivers a sense of urgency to the song roster, ignited by muted, distorted guitar racing alongside hammering tom patterns. Many of these production details were courtesy of Rose's tireless efforts to deliver a stellar recording.

"He works his ass off," Traxler says about Rose's contributions to *Send Us A Signal*, "and pushes the band. He was still real particular about everyone's takes. I mean, it was stressful, but I think it was worth it."

It's such inherent value that keeps pioneering artists like BRANDTSON at the forefront of their game, paving the road for future acts with their latest round of innovation. And with *Send Us A Signal*, BRANDTSON proves they're not ready to relinquish their reign anytime soon.

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