

BPM BEATS PER MINUTE



YOUTHFUL TRANSGRESSIONS

Some people just never grow up. Take Michael Sandison and Marcus Eoin of Boards Of Canada.

Their music recalls long-forgotten video-game themes and documentary film scores colored with a bittersweet sense of longing. The "Canada" in their name refers to a portion of Sandison's and Eoin's youth spent in that country, even though they now work and reside in their secluded Hexagon Sun bunker in Scotland's Pentland

Hills. And their new album, *Music Has The Right To Children* (Matador/Warp/Skam), presents a cryptic musical manifesto for the world's reluctant adults. Perhaps they've discovered the key to eternal youth; but like all children, they know how to keep a secret.

"We prefer to invite the listener into our work, not to smother them in it," Sandison says of the duo's creative approach. "The most quietly spoken people command the most attention from listeners, and it's also true that people who speak very loudly are often ignored. Once you start decoding things in our music, you'll be drawn into it forever."

Now in their late 20s, Sandison and Eoin have been making music both separately and together since the early '80s. Initially drawn to the goth pop of Cocteau Twins and the proto-electronic groups DAF and Devo, Boards Of Canada wrote music for a small group of family and friends. (This is still evident in their continuing stream of limited-edition releases under pseudonyms as well as the BOC moniker.) Eventually, the group's ranks diminished to the core of Sandison and Eoin, and they were discovered by Autechre's Sean Booth. A series of 12-inches on the intelligent dance music label Skam indicated the duo's instinctual

knack for naive rhythms and bittersweet melodies. As Sandison describes the BOC partnership, "It's as though we're psychic about music. We don't need to put it into words or to explain anything to each other. We have unspoken criteria."

Already hard at work on a follow-up to *Music*, Boards Of Canada are also keeping busy with a low-budget feature film project and planning to visit North America for a spring 1999 tour. It seems as if BOC are poised for success, which may force maturity on them after all. But Sandison sees this as unlikely. "For a lot of people, growing up means giving up everything that excites and stimulates you, and replacing it with repetition and conformity. If that's really what it is, then I don't intend to grow up. Sometimes I think we are adults trying to capture the sounds and feelings of childhood, but then I remember that we're actually kids, just mucking about like we've always done." —Justin Hampton

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