

Simpatico review

Danish rockers D:A:D decided to tone things down a bit for 1997's *Simpatico*, doing away with the overtly metallic riffing of predecessor *Helpyourselfish* to strike a surprisingly jangly alterna-rock chord instead. Jacob Binzer's dreamy, '50s-styled guitar is back to the forefront, providing new textures and nuances to the group's sound, which had grown quite predictable of late, even as it retained its overall high standards. For his part, brother and singer Jesper Binzer continues to impress with his odd twists of phrase, which have long been one of D:A:D's most original and endearing traits.

Together, the brothers lead the band on a traipse through countless bittersweet rockers, including "Empty Heads," "Home Alone," and "Hate to Say I Told You So."

And even when the band does whip out the big guns for the rare rave-up, D:A:D still manages to throw a monkey wrench into the mix -- for example, the industrial edge of "Cloudy Hours" and the jazzy accents that crop up on the title track.

Quality does take a turn for the worse as the album wears on but, even as the melancholy tone descends into a darker, resigned despair, a few true gems still emerge, namely the poignant "Hand Without Strength" and the tale of lost innocence, "You Do What I've Just Done."

All in all, another strong showing from this underappreciated band.