

Beirut - No No No (2015)

Written by bluelover

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1 Gibraltar 2 No No No 3 At Once 4 August Holland 5 As Needed 6 Perth 7 Pacheco 8 Fener 9 So Allowed Perrin Cloutier Accordion, Drums Paul Collins Bass, Bass (Electric), Bass (Upright), Farfisa Organ, Guitar, Guitar (Bass), Guitar (Electric), Vocals (Background) Zach Condon Celeste, Farfisa Organ, Juno, Keyboards, Korg Synthesizer, Mellotron, Moog Synthesizer, Percussion, Piano, Pump Organ, Synthesizer, Trumpet, Ukulele, Vocals, Wurlitzer Clarice Jensen Cello Ben Lanz Trombone Nick Petree Guitar (Acoustic), Guitar (Electric), Percussion, Vocals (Background) Kyle Resnick Trumpet Yuki Numata Resnick Violin Ben Russel Violin

Beirut's fourth full-length album, *No No No*, has songwriter/singer Zach Condon swaying away from 2011's more indie pop *The Rip Tide* back toward the European folk-infused eccentricity of the band's first two LPs, and hanging out somewhere in between. With a flock of instruments ranging from piano, guitars, bass, and percussion to brass, strings, ukulele, and a selection of vintage synths and electronic organs, the songs are rarely sparse and often whimsical -- a diversion from more typical indie rock fare, as has been Condon's calling card since the beginning. While there are several electronic instruments on *No No No*, the experience is that of an acoustic jamboree. The bouncy opening track, "Gibraltar," for instance, highlights bongo-type drumming, piano, handclaps, and Condon's distinctive, humming vocal tone over synths. The serene instrumental interlude, "As Needed," actually is entirely acoustic. Synthesizers and organs are much more prevalent on the title track, including its '80s video game-like intro and rhythmic keyboard intervals, but it still plays like a roaming street band, with colorful brass, hand-held percussion, and Eastern European folk scales. Elsewhere, "Fener" is a bright, celeste-stippled tune, and the laid-back "August Holland" and strolling "Perth" are mellow but with churning grooves befitting pre-Saturday night rituals. The overall effect of the album is similarly steady and reflective yet toe-tapping. A perhaps surprising tone not reflective of Condon's turbulent personal life during the four-year break since *The Rip Tide*, which included divorce and hospitalization, *No No No* is a feel-good mean of the band's prior releases that should appeal to the Beirut loyal as well as serve as a fine representative for any potential admirers who've simply managed to miss them along the way. ---Marcy Donelson, AllMusic Review

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