



Reviews:

Don't call it folk rock: Pinegrove defy definition on new album 'Cardinal'

Soren Spicknall
WIIT STATION MANAGER

It doesn't really make any sense, but Pinegrove lead singer, Evan Stephens Hall, often sounds like he has a Southern accent when he sings. Though Pinegrove hails from New Jersey, listening to just the first ten seconds or so of the band's latest album, you might mistake them for a fairly generic Nashville alt-country group. After that, everything changes, but not quite in the dramatic fashion you might expect. Though all the hallmarks of a folk rock group are present (mandolin, slide guitar, tambourine,) it's abundantly clear that Pinegrove are more akin to alt-punk than anything else, despite the fact that there are very few specific elements that you could point to that individually identify them as such. This genre nonconformity, seemingly crafted with ease, characterizes the entirety of *Cardinal*, which was released on Run For Cover Records last Friday, marking Pinegrove's first foray into traditional commercial territory.

Formed by three brothers approximately six years ago, Pinegrove has grown into a slightly larger group with the addition of Nandi Plunkett of Half Waif, a moody Brooklyn pop group. She appeared on their previous album and a couple EPs, but has never been used to the same wonderful extent that she appears in *Cardinal*. Her harmonies mark all of the album's first three tracks, but in a manner restrained enough to avoid dominating Hall's lead. Hall himself is as introspective as he's ever been, moving with ease between dark observations both literate and plainspoken, sometimes

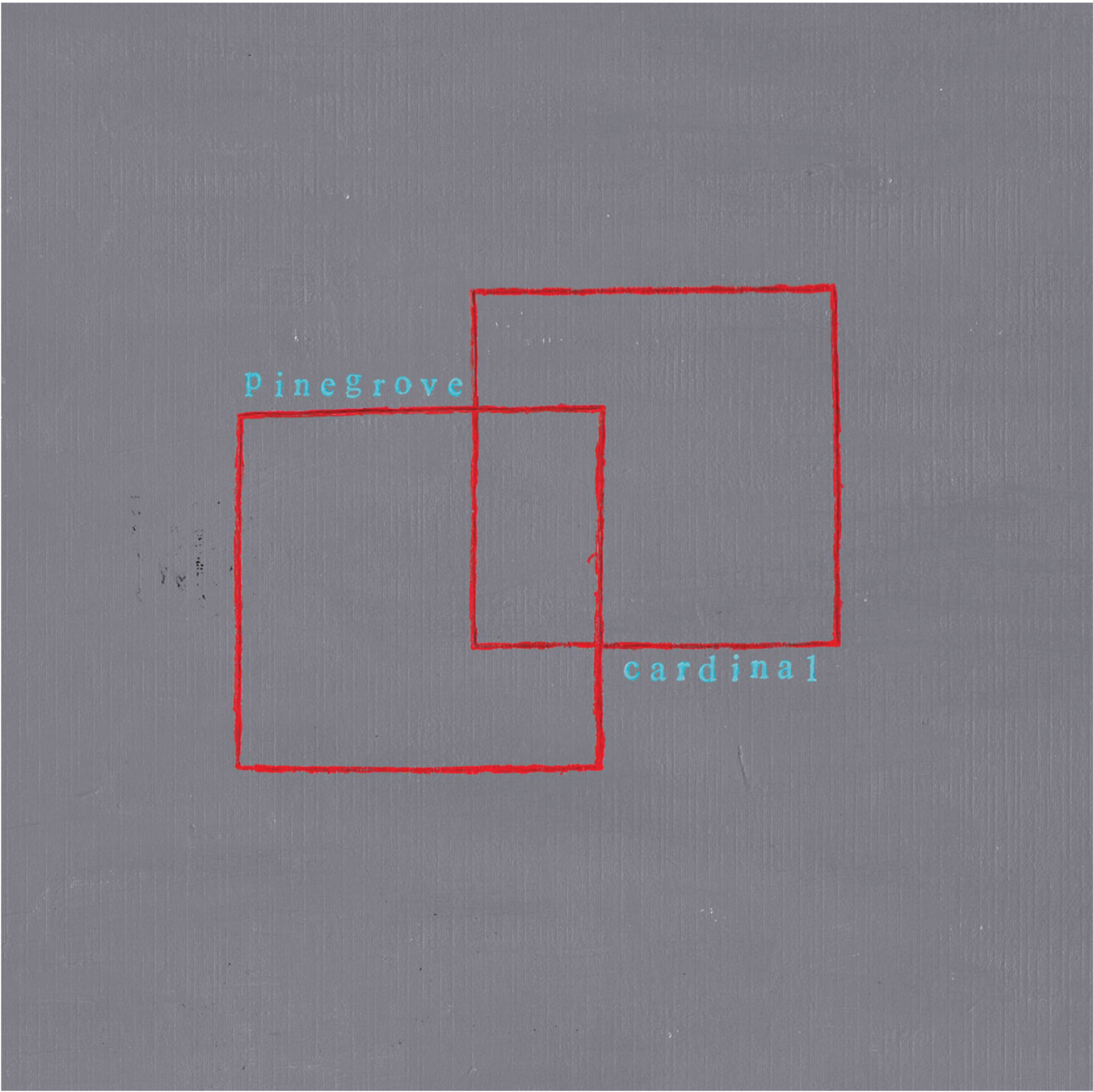


Image courtesy of Pinegrove

simultaneously ("If I did what I wanted, then why do I feel so bad?") It would be easy to proclaim Hall's songwriting to be simply angst-ridden, but the general atmosphere created by his lyrics has more emotional maturity and genuine heft than most of the countless groups

who have touched on similar themes throughout time. In this respect, Pinegrove is a stellar folk group, driven by a wordsmith both honest and intellectual.

Cardinal is a notably short album, barely edging past 30 minutes, but it's quite possible that any more would be overkill. Every song on the collection, from straight-ahead rock piece "Then Again" to the early Death Cab For Cutie-reminiscent "Size of the Moon" (which is the longest on the album, if only by virtue of a half-minute ambient outro) seems to slot perfectly into the release's flow, and any more might spoil the individual emotional weight of each composition. While you could much more easily envision Pinegrove opening for Basement (who they not coincidentally are label-mates with) than for Dawes, the band's inclusion of organic instruments and robust male-female harmonies makes them somewhat unique in their genre, and potentially compelling to a wide variety of audiences. This isn't folk punk, not by a longshot; Pinegrove certainly wouldn't fit in with Defiance, Ohio and Andrew Jackson Jihad. It's not the same sanitized alt-rock/folk blend that we're used to hearing from groups like The Lumineers and Hozier, either. Instead, *Cardinal* contains all the vigor and cutting passion of late-90s punk, with all the acoustic embellishments of your friendly local Americana performers. It's a bit of a strange blend to wrap your head around on paper, but it works remarkably well to the ears. If we hear more albums of this quality from Pinegrove, you're guaranteed to see a greatly expanded following rise up around them. 9.0/10

Newest Pixar movie delights, leaves viewers wanting more

Austin Gonzalez
OPINION EDITOR

Did you watch *Finding Nemo* and say to yourself, "I like this movie I just wish is had more dinosaurs in it?" Did you like the story of *The Hobbit*, but instead of a protagonist leaving home to travel to a misty mountain to defeat a dragon, you wanted a protagonist coming home by travelling to a misty mountain and defeating a pterodactyl? Do you like a classic story that involve an unsure protagonist who finds himself journeying vis-à-vis an epic journey and dinosaurs? Then *The Good Dinosaur* will be right up your alley!

Work started on *The Good Dinosaur* in 2009. It has been a turbulent road with this \$200 million production. With total costs for the movie closing in on half a billion US dollars, suppose *The Good Dinosaur* will be Disney's biggest flop since *Cars 2*. The problem with the movie is there's nothing new as far as character and story.

The audience is introduced to a world where the mass extinction Chicxulub Asteroid never hits and Dinosaurs continue to have a hold over much of the planet. They've learned to speak English and are now even ag-

riculturalists. 3 young baby Apatosaurus (big plant eating dinosaurs with long necks) are born and much to the surprise of no one, the runt of the litter, Arlo, is the main protagonist for the film. Arlo is weak, afraid, and feels unworthy in the shadow of his bigger, more competent, fearless siblings.

Everyone gets to make their mark on the family corn silo once they've earned it. One thing leads to another, parents die in the classic Pixar fashion and Arlo is whisked away by a raging river. Arlo has to trek through the unknown to find home again. Through his perilous adventure, we learn the morale of the story. Being afraid is OK. Fear is a part of life; it's how we deal with that fear that makes us who we are.

The story is fine, but what's truly amazing is the water effects. The computer generate water effects in this movie are beyond mind blowing. For a second I thought I was watching a demo reel for the latest and greatest flow dynamics simulation and not a movie about a little Apatosaurus. The B roll at the end of the movie is a game of "figure out how on Earth you might distinguish it from reality." The decidedly goofy style of the characters in the movie contrast the amazing advancements

in technology. 70% of the shots in *The Good Dinosaur* are so called effects shots where enhanced particle and lighting effects are used to take your brain and launch it into outer space. Every frame of painting has never been truer for a Pixar film.

At the end of the day, *The Good Dinosaur*'s frustratingly familiar plot may leave you wanting more. It's a classic tale of adventure, discovery, and wonder. While it doesn't come close to the impeccably high caliber of Pixar's other movies, it's good enough to see and makes for a good family movie.

One last thing to note, unrelated to whether or not the movie is worth seeing. The Spanish title for this movie is *Viaje de Arlo* (*The Journey of Arlo*) captures the essence of the movie better than *The Good Dinosaur*. Arlo isn't special and the majority of dinosaurs in the movie are pretty nice personalities. There's nothing about Arlo that makes him the good dinosaur, he's just a good dinosaur. I suppose, for toddlers, *The Good Dinosaur* is an easier title to swallow than *The Journey of Arlo*.



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