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**The Bitter Tears *Jam Tarts In The Jakehouse* LP/CD**

Carrot Top Records, Inc. Cat. No. saki044

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**LP Includes Free Digital Download!**

"...thank God for the creative, uber-feisty cabaret edge on this [Bitter Tears] local band's country-fried rock 'n' roll."—*Chicago Tribune*

**The Bitter Tears** have staked their reputation on a sometimes lewd and entertaining theatrical live show, always heavy on spectacle. With their new release, *Jam Tarts In The Jakehouse*, **The Bitter Tears** display their creative growth as both musicians and storytellers. The album utilizes smart and direct pop structures to drive the menacing, old-school twang of the songs, deftly melding it all into an aesthetic that owes as much to Weill and Waits as Big Star and Hank.

Taken hold by **Alan Scalpone** (vocals, guitar, brass, woodwinds), **Michael McGinley** (vocals, bass, brass, strings), **Bill Borton** (drums), **John Leonard** (piano) and **Greg Norman** (vocals, guitar, trombone, engineer), **The Bitter Tears** will release their second album, *Jam Tarts in the Jakehouse*, on **Carrot Top Records** on **March 3, 2009**.

Unpredictable stage appearance and occasional self-degradation turn some away, but there are those who enjoy the drama and discharge. "You are not alive," taunts Alan Scalpone on "Inbred Kings," before **The Bitter Tears** flesh out the melody with plaintive horns and frightening intensity. The gut-wrenching, liver-bearing songs on *Jam Tarts in the Jakehouse* serve a variety of weighty subject matter: A failed marriage turns to suicide, with the closing refrain "today is not too early to die" ("The Love Letter"); the farmer who loses his faith and wishes to destroy everything he has ever known—his farm, his family, even the three kings who traveled to see Jesus in the manger ("Slay the Heart of the Earth"); and the bad advice men give to other men ("Bachelors Say").

Recorded by band member Greg Norman, the production of *Jam Tarts In The Jakehouse* allowed **The Bitter Tears** full creative control. The raw material for the record was written late at night and early in the morning, with a threepenny orchestra's worth of instruments to help the process along. The result sounds antique, without sounding antiquated. The bawdy tales of revenge, lust, and corruption are backed by a dusty array of beat-up instruments: horns, oboes, violins...each helping to provide the same dramatic sparks that win people over on-stage.

As Scalpone puts it, "It keeps happening, that people come up to one of us and say something like, 'I thought you were just screwy when I first saw you, but you know, you actually write really good songs.'"

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