

RED HOUSE RECORDS

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The Pines DARK SO GOLD

RHR-CD-247 • Release Date: January 31, 2012

"Masterful songcraft...
Easily my favorite record of the year."
- Mason Jennings

"quietly gripping"
- Rolling Stone

"spooky country-noir...conjuring a grizzled sky,
parched fields and cold wind"
- PopMatters

Red House Records is pleased to announce the January 31, 2012 release of **The Pines'** epic new album *Dark So Gold*. It follows their radio-charting *Tremolo*, which received rave reviews and was highlighted in *PopMatters* and *CMT.com* as one of the top Americana albums of the year. Showcasing their distinct blend of dark atmospheric indie-folk, rock and blues, The Pines' new album shows a young band that has fully arrived with a sound and song craft that stands apart on the indie music landscape. Frontmen **Benson Ramsey** (vocals, guitars, keyboards) and **David Huckfelt** (vocals, acoustic guitar) lead up the expanded seven-piece band that includes **Alex Ramsey** (keyboards, vocals), **J.T. Bates** (drums), **James Buckley** (bass), **Michael Rossetto** (banjo) and **Jacob Hanson** (guitar). Together they create a cinematic soundscape of radio-friendly songs and beautiful instrumentals that display all the grace and sensibility of a truly great record.

From the haunting opening track "Cry, Cry, Crow," The Pines conjure up rural specters and ghosts from the farms slowly disappearing throughout their native Midwest. Exploring the tension between city and small town and the loneliness that can exist in both, they move through breakups and new beginnings on songs like "If By Morning," "All the While," "Dead Feathers" and the radio-friendly "Chimes." Whether rocking out ("Rise Up and Be Lonely") or playing contemplative instrumentals ("Moonrise, IA" and "Losing the Stars"), The Pines cook up a diverse palette of musical flavors and songs that reflect on cold days, dark nights and the hope that shines in between. Drawing light out of shadows, *Dark So Gold* is an album that provides solace in hard times and stands as The Pines' masterwork to date.

The Pines just finished a North American tour with **Mason Jennings**, opening for him and playing in his band. In 2012, they will be hitting the road again, touring in support of their new album and playing dates both as a trio (David Huckfelt, Benson Ramsey and Alex Ramsey) and as a full rock band. They will also be showcasing at this year's **South By Southwest (SXSW) Conference**, where they have been a big hit with both critics and fans. For their full schedule, please visit www.thepinesmusic.com or www.redhousetrecords.com.

Look for the release of the new single

"Rise Up and Be Lonely"

January 2, 2012 on iTunes!

ABOUT THE PINES

Rising out of the prairies of the Midwest, **The Pines** are one of the most distinct and powerful indie-rock/Americana groups to hit the national scene in years. Emerging from the same Minneapolis music world that spawned such notable acts as The Jayhawks, The Replacements and Bob Dylan, The Pines have gathered a stunning line-up of musical talent, in both their live shows and on record, that has gained them a faithful and growing following.

Frontmen **Benson Ramsey** and **David Huckfelt** share a common musical language rooted in the songs and songwriters of their native Iowa, while each bringing a distinct voice and sensibility to the sound that *Rolling Stone* senior writer David Fricke called “quietly gripping” stark-country. The mysterious sound of The Pines fuses Benson’s ethereal, otherworldly, heart-piercing songs with David’s earthy, darkly romantic and rough-hewn visionary tales. With masterful guitar work, beautiful vocals and the graceful keyboard and vocal additions of Benson’s brother **Alex Ramsey**, the core of The Pines’ sound captivates and elevates with rare intimacy.



THE PINES (from left to right): James Buckley, Jacob Hanson, Michael Rossetto, Alex Ramsey, David Huckfelt, J.T. Bates, Benson Ramsey

Surprisingly, David Huckfelt and Benson Ramsey actually began their musical partnership in Arizona, where they both lived in a Mexican barrio and first began playing together. The son of **Greg Brown’s** producer and sideman **Bo Ramsey**, Benson was reared on folk and blues music and continues to let those influences shine, even on louder electric songs. David also had a deep love for traditional music, and together the two of them started crafting songs that evoke the ancient, while incorporating newer rock and pop sounds.

Committing to a musical career together, Benson and David returned to their Midwestern roots and moved to Minneapolis, where they slowly grew their band to include banjo player **Michael Rossetto** (Spaghetti Western String Co.), drummer **J.T. Bates** (Michel Portal, John Gorka), bassist **James Buckley** (Ed Harcourt, Daniel Johnston, Dosh) and Benson’s brother Alex Ramsey on keyboards.

Creating quite a buzz around the Twin Cities and across the Upper Midwest, The Pines caught the attention of acclaimed indie label **Red House Records** and signed with them in 2007, releasing their breakout album *Sparrows in the Bell*, named one of the **top roots releases of the year** by *Q Magazine*. The Pines wowed audiences at the **2008 South By Southwest (SXSW)** and were named one of the musical highlights by **CMT.com**. They followed up this success with *Tremolo*, an album that garnered rave reviews in magazines like *Rolling Stone* and got airplay on tastemaker stations such as **KCRW** and **The Current**. It landed them coveted performances on **Daytrotter.com** and **Bob Harris’** popular **BBC** show, winning them new fans across North America and Europe. A great live act whether performing as a stripped-down trio (David Huckfelt, Benson Ramsey and Alex Ramsey) or as a full rock band, The Pines’ devoted cult following and has led them to share the stage with such diverse acts as **Jolie Holland**, **The Arcade Fire**, **Iris DeMent**, **Mavis Staples**, **Bon Iver** and **The Holmes Brothers**.

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RED HOUSE DISCOGRAPHY

Dark So Gold (2012) – *Tremolo* (2009) – *Sparrows in the Bell* (2007)

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QUOTES

“Like a midnight blizzard, the songs of the Pines are dark, ominous and strangely hypnotic.”

- ***Boston Globe***

“Like the great folk-rock bands of yesteryear, The Pines simultaneously command tradition and the moment....they can go from funny to spooky in a *Blonde on Blonde* minute.”

- **Dave Marsh**
(*Rolling Stone, Village Voice*)

“tracks crackle with low-key electricity through the Dylanesque dark....should appeal to fans of Bon Iver and Ray La Montagne.”

- ***Pasadena Weekly***

“A state of emergency runs through these songs, but there is a safe haven too, even if it’s just a dream, and the Pines get there with a warm, drawling poise in their voices and sparse resonant picking.”

- ***Rolling Stone***

“Their original tunes resonate down through the crucible of time.”

- ***Vintage Guitar***

“Music at once so fragile, so gravid and, ultimately, beautiful”

- ***Penguin Eggs***

“talented singers and songwriters...The Pines can make you feel happy and sad almost simultaneously.”

- ***No Depression***

“rural song-poets...The music sings through The Pines.”

- ***Rambles.net***

“The sparse and haunting mood of the album washes over you like an early morning fog....the poetic lyrics also gently insinuate themselves with every spin.”

- ***Exclaim!***

“Quiet, serene, romantic, mysterious—The Pines are all these things and more”

- ***Goldmine***

“acoustic folk with electric blues marked by understated melodies, atmospheric arrangements and restrained guitar licks...these guys speak for themselves.”

- ***Winnipeg Free Press***