The Echocentrics is a new band from Austin-based two-time Grammy nominated producer Adrian Quesada, a member of Grupo Fantasma, and one of the minds behind bands Ocote Soul Sounds and Brownout. Teaming up with Argentinean singer Natalia Clavier and Brazil-based Tita Lima, he has carved out a southern-fried, laid back, and psychedelic-tinged album to be released in late spring 2011.

Quesada plays an interesting cross-cultural game of musical ping pong mixing multiple languages (songs are sung in a mix of English, Portuguese and Spanish) and influences from the likes of Tim Maia and Rita Lee, Serge Gainsbourg, and David Axelrod. Buckets of spring reverb, huge doses of psychedelic out farfisa and electric harpsichord, and super-heavy drums back soulful vocals. Quesada recalls classic American funk and low-rider soul, but shades everything with a South American twist. As the Austinist blog said, this is “World music for people who tend to blanch at the very idea of it, maybe.” At times the music sounds like the lost Morricone soundtrack to a sun scorched Tarantino movie scene dosed in peyote. But the Sunshadows album also reaches breezier heights as Quesada weaves in exotic elements of Afrobeat, Latin funk, and Brazilian folk.

To complete his outernational vision he called upon the talents of Clavier (Frederic Aubele/Thievery Corporation vocalist) and Lima (who has appeared on the Ubiquity-released Ohmega Watts “Watts Happening” album and is the daughter of Liminha, bass player for Os Mutantes.) “They helped expand the vision and created a sound that was sensual and soulful but still somewhat dusty and raw,” explains Quesada. “I sometimes prefer non-English lyrics as its less oratory and the voice becomes more of an instrument,” he adds.

It’s no surprise that Quesada picked Southern Americans as vocalists as it was a little known Peruvian band, Los Pasteles Verdes, and in particular their bolero (ballad) “Esclavo Y Amo,” that were a big inspiration for the album. The original is a catchy obscurity that takes the form of an instrument,” he adds.

On “Sunshadows” The Echocentrics weave through ballads and cinematic instrumentals building steam to reach the faster tempo Latin-funk of “Dudar” and the hybrid Afro-beat/Brazilian flavored “Mundo Pequeno.” On “Don Alejo” they deliver a spaghetti western style head-nod-inducing instrumental, while the string-laden “Crescent Sun” is cruise-ready, top-down, Austin funk. “I would say the sound we’re going for is bigger than just a reflection of the sound of Austin,” says Quesada. “It’s also the sound of Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Brooklyn, Barcelona, etc etc.”

Echocentrics shows are already in the works, with a kick-off at SXSW 2011. Quesada promises that the live show will be “a stripped down affair that is all live and organic - a little more aggressive than the record and so far, in practice, it sounds like a mix of early 1970s Curtis Mayfield and Bill Withers running through a PA that’s hooked up to a Roland Space Echo.”