O’Brother just got famous. Well, not big-name, Grammy-winning famous, but their first album just came out to rave reviews, all thanks to the men hard work. They came wide-eyed, unkempt and hairy on to the alternative scene about two years ago when they started to make a name for themselves on Circa Survive’s spring tour.

O’Brother’s new release and first full-length album called, Garden Window, captivates, moves and throbs with emotion and pulse. The album is utterly fantastic and while it’s a step away from their EP, they still manage to stay true to their overall sound. Think Thrice’s melody and Brand New’s catchiness and lyricism meet head-on with Mastodon’s sludge-and-trudge assault. For those of you that are familiar with all three of those bands, O’Brother will feel right at home in your music library. For those of you that aren’t, prepare to be shocked, as not all of the tracks are too heavy to burden.

Tracks like “Bear,” “Easy Talk (Open Your Mouth),” and “Cleanse Me” are soothing and brimming with thought-provoking lyrics and guitar tones. You will bob your head and sway your hips to their uncanny ability to groove on slower tracks. If you do enjoy metal though, “Machines Pt. 1” and “Sputnik” are caked in mud, grime and strike at your ears with droning guitars and the deep bass drum.

The quintet is definitely not your normal metal band; they lack the screaming vocals and the atonal guitar noise. They have three guitarists, which allow them to cover all ranges of sound to please the ear. The main singer, Tanner, chugs along with fellow lead guitarist, Anton Dang, and baritone/flavorful guitarist Aaron Wamack; Anton and Aaron both play the higher/melodic parts as well as the low-end parts to round out O’Brother’s signature sound.

The rhythm section, led by Johnny Dang on bass and Michael Martens on drums, is a relentless attack and release of bold/fuzzy notes and snare hits/bass smacks. O’Brother’s sound is so different from any other band because they capitalize on their influences while managing to forge their own medium. The songs and their accompanying sound is dark: songs about dying, lovers leaving and the ascension of the soul.
The lyricism of Tanner is remarkably efficient, yet brilliant. He achieves a mastery of subjects and diction while not making the songs too wordy. This is how their shorter songs are so catchy and rhythmic. O’Brother locks into a groove that, to an unappreciative listener, seem to go on forever and loop Tanner’s song “Theme.” This repetition is one of the most beautiful elements of Garden Window.

The opening track, “Malum,” is echoed in the beginning of “Lo,” the second track, forcing the listener to carry the weight of Tanner’s words on “Malum.” The album’s title track, “Lay Down” is a groovy metal track that builds upon the track before it, “Poison.” O’Brother wrote all of the songs as one fluid track in order to take the reader on a multi-layered story. This is hard to find in music these days, especially with 2-3 minute songs that are aimed at sex, drug and pop appeal. Their work ethic on this album shows in their live show as well. O’Brother wants you to feel the rumble of the bass in your arms and legs, the lyrics hit your mind and make you breathe differently; their live show seeps into your bones and enraptures even the most unlikely soul, because they put so much effort into presenting their music.

Having seen them three times, it’s hard to believe that they have a small following. Those that have seen them are impressed with O’Brother’s songwriting and instrumental capabilities. O’Brother’s tact and ability to have balance between the heavy and soft on Garden Window truly enables them to sell an album to a wide range of audiences, without diminishing their non-mainstream appeal. One bite into Garden Window and you’re hooked.