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Esher's Enigma

Cyrus Rhodes 3 March 12:59



Artist: Esher's Enigma

Album: For A Moment

Label: South Sunrise East Studios

Website: <http://www.eschersenigma.com/>

Strengths: Excellent vocals, Quality mix and overall atmosphere, Great busy basslines

Weaknesses: Lyrical content at times can be a little cheesy

Primary URL: <http://www.eschersenigma.com/>

Esher's Enigma is a father and son duo that is based in the New York/Connecticut area, consisting of Russ Miller playing bass, and his son, Brian Miller, covering lead vocals, guitars, keys, and midi effects. Both Miller's have been involved in music for most of their lives; Miller senior played in several hard rock bands in the seventies and eighties, and has also done a lot of recording and engineering work. Brian Miller has also played in several original bands since a young age, and has also been in a few popular local New York rock groups, such as Toy Box Heroes and Moosen. However, both Millers have interests and talents that extend beyond music; Russ Miller has a Ph.D in computer science, and has produced a great amount of scholarly research. Brian Miller now has his own professional variety entertainment act, where he does everything from music, to comedy, to magic. This album, released early last month, is titled "For A Moment".

This album could best be described as a contemporary, up to date version of classic Simon and Garfunkel. Everything from the songwriting, to the vocals, to the overall theme of the mix and instrumentation will remind you of those shimmering and bright Simon and Garfunkel melodies, yet with a bit more modern take that relies a little less on pure acoustic instrumentation and a little more on electrified alternative sensibility. Great credit should be given to Brian Miller on this album, who took care of most of the instrumentation as well as the lead vocals. Brian's vocals fit perfectly with the overall shimmering, bright, alternative acoustic rock mix that is consistent throughout "For A Moment". In many ways, Brian Miller sounds so much like Paul Simon; he has that same kind of sharp, cutting, airy voice that we are all so familiar with from tunes like "The Boxer". Brian's voice ranges from soft and delicate to a crescendo of piercing clarity. You won't hear any kind of distortion or rasp in this voice, everything is so clean and spotless, yet still conveys a keen sense of passion and emotion. Brian Miller's vocals are particularly impressive on ballad-like tunes, such as "Beginnings". One of the main factors that separates this album from the "Simon and Garfunkel" sound is the guitar work. There are some pretty nice guitar solos in this album, and although they aren't anything crazy or over the top, they are certainly well constructed and edgy enough to qualify Esher's Enigma as much more than a one-dimensional acoustic rock group. Another huge aspect to "For A Moment" is Russ Miller's basswork. Russ Miller is credited only for playing bass on this album, but it was a

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job that he excelled at. The bass in this album is spectacular, and is probably one of the most distinctive element's to Esher's Enigma's original sound. First off, the bass is mixed almost perfectly; it is warm, bright, and non-insistent. In many ways, the bass actually leads the song along in its own interesting melodies and phrases. One of the coolest things to listen for on this album is how busy those basslines are and how much Russ Miller is doing in those tracks.

For the most part, the songwriting on this album is fantastic. Tunes are often tastefully arranged and the lyrics and vocals match well with the themes of instrumentation and mixing. However, this album is not without its cheesy moments. The fifth track, "Hide Behind The Text", is an example of some of the songs that Esher's Enigma appear to have just done for fun. There isn't anything wrong with these tracks by themselves, but when they stand with the rest of the album, there just doesn't seem to be very much cohesion. I wouldn't go as far to say that "For A Moment" has a few filler tracks on it, but I would certainly say that it is an album where the songwriting quality varies quite a bit.

The overall mix and theme of this album is excellent, and this father son duo have a lot to be proud of. The album is bright, warmhearted, delicate, yet edgy at times. The basswork and vocals are fantastic, and there are certainly a few tracks on this work that really shine with a mixture of originality and high quality engineering.

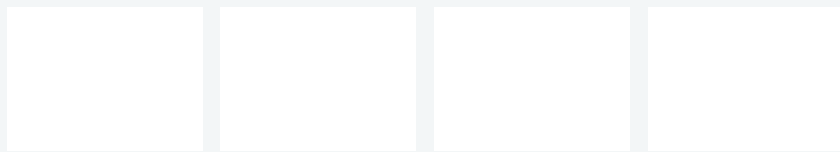
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Score: 7/10 Stars

Owen Mattheson

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