

Entertainment

SUN-60 Commentary (or) "I Told You So, Bev"

sun-60 (selftitled)
Epic/Sony Canada
commentary by Beverley White

"Hey Bev," said my editor (with the muffled glint of semi-pity, semi-relief he usually gets in his eye when assigning me something particularly horrific to review), "want to review some really awful s**t?"

"Sure," said I, "I'll review anything."

So he hands me this artsy-looking CD I thought was the new Everything But The Girl album for a sec. "Actually, they're not *that* bad — they sound like a cross between Suzanne Vega, Edie Brickell and the New Bohemians and Roxette" (the last uttered with slight revulsion). "I figured, *somebody* will probably like them for some half-decent reasons."

"Coolness," saith I. "Doesn't sound too scary."

Those of you who read my review of Ujaama in *Soundcheck* will remember my sure-fire test of quality for a recording: slap it in the stereo and go do something else. If you have something really exceptional, you'll drop what you're doing and got sit in front of the speakers. If you have something adequate but not particularly shimmery, you carry on what you're doing and the music will sort of fade off into the distance. If you have a piece of "really awful s**t," then you'll quite willingly pull the recording out of the stereo and listen to something better (Slim Whitman, for example).

sun-60 (one of those groups that think they're so terribly individual that they can break typical grammatic rules and use an all-lowercase-letter name) falls into the middle category. It's perfect mood music, a kind of atmospheric melee if you will; it's the kind of pseudo-weird "bubbling-under-the-top-40" pop that hovers at the fringes of AOR radio and throws off little reflective glints of light occasionally when the DJ condescends enough to play it.

The fact of the matter is, sun-60 is nothing we haven't heard before in some other permutation. This is what the somewhat stuffy record executives at such-and-such a major conglomerate label seems to think is "alternative; something the kids can dance to and feel smart listening to at the same time." You've probably got at least one of these tapes yourself. (If your tastes are easily offended, steer clear of this last paragraph today instead of biting off my head tomorrow). Do you think Nirvana is the coolest thing around right now? Did you dance only to Deee-Lite in 1990? In 1989, did you plug into "What I am/is what I am" by Edie Brickell and go "Oh, deepness?" Then you'd probably jump over sun-60.

It's *Sassy* magazine for the ears, people. That's all, and nothing more. It's on the fringes and it's a welcome change from the endless pounding of "I'm too sexy for my [pick your favorite mundane object]," but the fringe is still a part of the whole. You're not listening to anything new.

So what *are* you listening to? Chris gave me a fairly accurate assessment. sun-60 isn't much more than shiny happy people guitars and Rebel Pebble-esque vocals making profound philosophical statements like "I can't believe the unbelievable so I find myself responsible." The music jangles. Sometimes it thinks it's two-week wonder Candy Dulfer and does the "saxuality" thing. It'll seem dated in a week. Wait and see.

I spent two years in North Carolina and one of the first things I wanted to do when I got back was work for the Bruns again. It wasn't the same office I worked in back in '89, but it was still home. I loved every minute of the past term (including the Red 'n Black). Sentimental girl that I am, I want to say *thank you* to all the staff and editors (especially tolerant and intriguing people like Chris Hunt) who let me into their little world to help create the weekly bliss and bane of thousands of people every week. It's been one hell of a ride, y'all. God love ya.

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