

# Sting: serious about his music

by Peter Wegemer and Jon Legorburu

With the release of the Police's *Ghost in the Machine*, the recording public was exposed to the serious new Sting. On this eerily beautiful album, 1983's *Synchronicity*, and his first solo effort, *Dream of the Blue Turtles*, Sting relayed the horrors of Belfast, the angst of relationships, and the perils of nuclear power to a mass audience. With his new album, *Nothing Like the Sun*, Sting has unleashed a barrage of serious songs upon a suspecting public. His seriousness is overshadowed only by his keen sense of writing, and his

personal songs appeal to a mass audience without stooping to blatant commercialism.

However, instead of addressing his attention to universal

and "Stright To My Heart", Sting examines the workings of the human soul and spirit. Yet he manages to retain a strong social criticism, tackling problems

(Gueca Solo)", which is a song full of criticism aimed at the political actions of the present Chilian administration. Sting makes a personal address to

ble son?" This reference to the dance of the disappeared shows Sting is not afraid to question the power of a man who creates nothing but despair and causes people to want to dance on the graves of their oppressors.

Once again Sting has assembled a band of amazing musicians to complement his lyrics. Both keyboardist Kenny Kirkland and sax player Branford Marsalis, two musicians who played on the *Blue Turtles* album, have returned, and former Police guitarist Andy Summers plays on two songs.

There is, however, quite a lot of wasted potential on the album. Why, for example, does

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problems as he did on his previous solo effort, Sting has turned inwards. With songs like "Be Still My Beating Heart", "History Will Teach Us Nothing",

which are as relevant as those on his previous album.

A good example of Sting's strong personal style of songwriting is "They Dance Alone

Pinochet. He appeals (in vain perhaps) to the leader's humanity and his 'morality' when he asks, "Can you think of your own mother dancing with her invisi-

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**Sting wants to overshadow their brilliance?**

Sting have both Mark Knopfler and Eric Clapton play on "They Dance Alone" when there can be very little guitar heard in the song? Could it be Sting wants to overshadow their brilliance, or has he forgotten what good, fluid guitar by musicians of this talent can do for a song? Also, Sting's version of Jimi Hendrix's "Little Wing" features Gil Evans and his Orchestra, but where can they be heard on the song? Sting uses his voice as the predominant instrument, neglecting the great talent he has at his disposal. Please, Sting, the next time, try to use your musicians to provide texture, not as marketing tools so people will buy your

**Sting's name has become synonymous with quality**

album. Work with them, not above them.

*Nothing Like the Sun*, despite these minor faults, succeeds due to its continuous flow from one song to the other. Each song begs to be listened to again and sets the listener up for the next song on the album. Over the years, Sting's name has become synonymous with quality, and *Nothing Like the Sun* will not disappoint.

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