

Album Review: Sam Smith – In The Lonely Hour

[Isabel Pearson](#) tells us why Sam Smith's new album fails to live up to the hype

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One of the many successful Alumni of the Youth Music Theatre, Sam Smith, has finally brought an album to the music scene. This 22 year-old British Singer first made an appearance in 2012 on Disclosure's breakthrough single "Latch", which was a crazy hit on the electro house music scene. After his second feature on Naughty Boy's "La La La", no one was expecting the pleas of unrequited love that dominate much of his new LP.

The album starts well. Radio 1 listeners will be familiar with "Money on My Mind", an upbeat tune with an infectiously addictive chorus that has been dominating the charts recently. There is no indication that this is only the beginning of an Adele-esk album of heart-break and loss. A couple of tracks later "Stay With Me" is a euphoric, slow building love-song that's raw and undeniably one of the best tracks on this album. If you check out the EP for this track there are some truly fantastic renditions from the likes of Shy FX and Wilfred Giroux (preference with the latter) that are worth listening to if you're into that kind of music.

Admittedly the first listen to this album is just a blur of slow, soulful love songs in the middle that are hard to distinguish between. They are very similar in terms of tune and lyrical base. However multiple listens offer the distinction of songs such as "Like I Can" and "Lay Me Down", that are a reminder as to why this singer is being talked about. "Restart" unfortunately offers some bizarre 80s vibes that doesn't quite work with the rest of the tracks on this album.

However it is the end of the album that brings it back to the standard established at the beginning. The acoustic version of "Latch" is beautiful and soulful, a true example of this singers incredible skill of expression and versatility between genres of music in comparison to his feature on Disclosure's electro-house classic. The penultimate track "La La La" reminds us of Sam Smith's arrival on the music scene, bringing this album out of its slow beat style. This track is still just as good as the first time.

Finishing with "Make it to Me", the 22 year old singer returns to the meaning behind this album, "*so much*

to get off my chest... you're the one designed for me...". In an interview with *The Fader*, Smith explained *"'In the Lonely Hour' is about a guy that I fell in love with last year, and he didn't love me back,"*; this undeniably sums up the whole LP.

Overall a mixed listen – a few notable songs and an undeniably characterful voice – yet so many artists such as Adele and Winehouse have had such a debut in this genre of music its hard to compare him to this standard. I applaud Sam Smith on finally releasing an album which has received a lot of hype on the music scene, but unfortunately the only tracks making it onto my iPod this summer will be the remixes...



2 comments

Ollie

4 Jun '14 at 12:18 am

Completely disagree with all of the negative comments above. It's incredible.

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Jason

4 Jun '14 at 3:09 pm

Restart may sound "bizarre" to you because it's a song about changing. In an interview Sam said Restart is like a fresh air, as well as hope, after the other sad tunes in the album. It kind of serves as a connection to his next album.

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