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## Everything Everything - Arc: Album Review

By Isaac BD, Music Editor (2012/13)

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Despite *Man Alive*, their debut album, having been shortlisted for the 2011 Mercury Prize, it has taken a good while for Everything Everything, English band to break into public consciousness. It would seem, though, that they're poised to gain much greater fame; the (very) recent release of *Arc*, their second album release since formation in late 2007, was met with much media-buzz, particularly given the resoundingly positive reception of singles 'Kemosabe' and 'Cough Cough'.

A chief complaint levelled at their previous effort was that it sounded like they might be trying too hard, employing rhythmic structures and bizarre, Radiohead-esque effects in a manner more complex than necessary. Whilst this, presumably, was in an attempt to demonstrate as much musicality in as small a space as possible, it lacked the subtlety characterised by a Radiohead album, instead drawing attention to the songwriting which served as something of a distraction. Happily, this is far less the case with *Arc*; whilst many of the individual tracks ('Choice Mountain', for example) demonstrate a grasp of songwriting peculiar to a two-album Indie band, the hallmark here is one of restraint. As such, though we get a taste of the skill inherent in the crafting of each track, it's never forced down our throats in the same way as some found fault with their first album.

Tracks such as 'The House is Dust' and 'The Peaks' are nothing if not minimalist, providing a stark contrast to the slightly out-of-place 'Don't Try', my least favourite track on the album which, with a perhaps misplaced R&B vibe, seems to have ended up in the wrong album. Certainly, on a chronological play-through, it seems to undermine the more mellow, ultimate feel evident in the tracks preceding it.

This album signals a shift in the right direction for a band whose problem is most definitely not that they lack talent, but rather that they need to hone the craft of displaying it and the craft of album-making. While it lacks some coherence as a singular work, this can be explained away. As a relatively young band, they're still in the process of developing their individual sound, toying with ideas and, as this album is testament to, discovering that they're well on the way to cracking it.

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