



This Is A Shakedown "Love Kills," CD Review

4 ½ out of 5 stars

Reviewed by Jade Baird

The debut album from This Is A Shakedown! is a new mix of rock and industrial techno. Being a new band straight from Cleveland, Ohio, their sound is original compared to the mainstream bands with radio hits out there. Using keyboards and voice synthesizers, as well as their creative mixing of vocal tracks and programming, they create an electronic sound that that would work at both dance clubs and rock concerts. Brandon Zano's vocals are melodic and have a nice falsetto to reach higher notes that emphasize the trans-pop that stands on its own in a genre-bending way. The guitars also add a layer to the mix, creating a punk influence on the style of each song. With their jumpy, electro vibes and lyrics of girls, cravings, and clubs, this band is more teen and youth targeted. They have used the internet (myspace and facebook) as a way of getting their music to the audiences' ears. This new way of music marketing has a huge influence on the industry and has gotten many bands' sounds out there, including This Is A Shakedown!

On the CD, the song "Radio" has a message of lust and desire for an idol (and possibly musician) that he hears on the radio and can't get out of his mind. The song has an enchanting melody, with symbols, guitars, and a piano piece to top it off. The lyrics talk of how his "obsession starts to grow" and how it "just keeps getting more hard core." The last verse of the song breaks down and becomes aggressive, as if playing along this the singer's urge to forget his infatuation. Its ends with a calm piano bit that simulates peace, as he has dealt with his feelings and seems to have learned how to forget her. A more industrial sounding song, "Oh!" uses a lot of effects to create a more underground feel. A constant synthesizer pulsates throughout the piece, making a new electro rhythm that entrances the listener into a head-bobbing, foot-tapping reaction. The vocals are also remixed so they repeat themselves in the chorus. As the song tells of a boy getting a girl he wants, the music acts as the storyteller as it beats with the conviction the boy uses when speaking of the girl. The first single off the record, "Circles," has the same industrial, indie rock sound, with clanking noises and voice synthesizers.

The song "My Funny Valentine" has an instrumental hook of drums and string arrangements. With the whispering vocals overlapping the haunting music, it creates a spell-binding story of an overwhelming love and how a girl wants to change herself to be everything for the boy she loves. This song, as its

sound, is different from the others because it's slower, soothing, and more powerful with its message. For a band with a distinctly different style, this song sticks out as the most unique on the record.

This new band definitely has a premise and understanding of today's developing market for a techno-industrial style. Their sound can relate to more than one genre, and thus, be included in more scenes, bringing in more fans. Both rockers and radio-friendly music fans can enjoy the sounds of the keyboard, synthesizers, and steady drums as they listen to This Is A Shakedown! Teens, club-goers, and internet music junkies will be happy with this new taste of a different type of music experience



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