

Echofission - "The Straights"

Review By: Roadie Bruce Robertson (R. Dogg)

** note on ADVICE: I mean this to emphasize what YOU could improve, not what I could improve (as I am nowhere near your league). As an unbiased reviewer (I try - but I'm still a fan), this is my opinion only and take it as such.

** note on SCORE: This is what I would rate it out of five and in brackets what I would rate it on garageband.com

Example: 4.5 -- (5) or 3.3 -- (3)



"Brand New God"

- CD opens with a solid rocking track backed with a catchy riff and fronted by the in your face "wall-of-vocal"
- really groovy track
- all instruments on board in a tight melodic fashion
- Great opening track - lets the listener know they're in for a treat
- around 2:40 - awesome isolation of the guitar riff into a fantastic guitar solo full of life and energy
- poppy tune with a hard edge and wicked production
- Halfway between heavy and pop -- but all killer on the way

Score: 4.7 -- (5)

"Door"

- Plucky bass-line grooves with a hooky "beat-beat-beat" change in it that keeps the verse fresh
- Great use of varied tempos and fantastic backing vocals out of the chorus and into the 2nd verse
- Sounds like two or maybe three song ideas melded into one tune "like the best parts of a few different songs" -- but singular in nature - perfect blend in a pop/rock tune
- steady hammered out notes in the lead guitar outro
- nice string bends in the intro
- This song sounded good on first listen -- but better each time I've heard it afterwards
- so many great elements here - a feature that seems to be very upfront and present in Echofission's writing style - which is to say the crafting of genuine songwriting beauty

Score: 4.8 -- (5)

"When Autumn Leaves"

- Really great lead guitar work - catchy with nice build-ups (especially the outro)
- Nice hook in the chorus vocal-wise
- This song is a thousand times better than the crap that gets Top 40 these days
- The song is perfect. I really like how the harmonies come in as they are.
- "kind of like the breeze, when you blew you into me" <--- Very catchy. Very, very catchy. I'm in awe and jealous at the same time
- guitar soloing here very well done again
- Great rocking outro
- Wow.
- Unbelievable. You guys just speak to the soul when you breathe life into these computer speakers. Amazing tune. Solid as steel. Catchy as hell.

Score: 5.0 -- (5)

"San Diego"

- feels a little naked in the beginning, but I think that actually really works for the tune. In fact I've heard it several times now and it really WORKS the feeling of the tune.
- picks up steam and really gets going
- love the backing vocals
- reminds me of a pop-easy rock/alt. kind of Beach Boys -- :)
- song really grows on me
- More listening really, really grows on you.
- This song would sound awesome as a live acoustic number in a small club setting.
- The reasons I initially dismissed the song have turned into familiar scars. It's a rough term, I know...but it feels right to me
- love the "Dooo" parts I like how this tune adds a different element to "The Straights" CD It's adds great variety
- THE END HALF OF THE TUNE <--- damn, just kicks it up a notch and keeps running stronger and stronger
- I think I have really been forgetting to mention just how tight the drums and bass are. If these songs were buildings, they'd have the best structure supporting them. Well Done.
- This song is fantastic. It really just keeps growing on me and I love it.

Score: 4.7 -- (5)

"The Straights"

- great musicianship and vocals

- opening guitar riffs hypnotically groovy working into a addictively catchy blend of killer 90's riffing with awesome backing vocals blending together with the solid backing drum/bass combo
- Leads are solid, hooking in the listener love the backing vocals over them in places - nice touch going higher at mid point vocally
- Not as heavy as "Twirl" or "Seismic Election" but a touch "pop"-ier and still very radio friendly (aren't all your tunes?)
- the verse guitars are sneaky in how pulsingly grooving they are
- Sounds like 90's indy rock (the best rock if ever there was) if it came out with a 2007/2008 edge to it -- I mean this in the ABSOLUTE best light possible
- Bass really works it's subtle magic on this track
- rarely you get a band with this much talent AND able to showcase it all in one tune so well
- Singer really know how to use his pipes - like a seasoned professional behind the mic

Score: 4.6/5 -- (5)

"Woman By The Water"

- reminds me of cruising in my car on vacation in the summer - lovely melody
- vocals are smoothly delivered hovering over the steady, driving beat of the tune
- Damn fine summer tune
- This might be the best damn track I could ever play while cruising in my '92 LeSabre -- hell in any car
- A touch of Blue Rodeo (just a little touch-mind you) with the indy rocker delivery -- no, with the ECHOFISSION delivery. Perfect blend of ... well, everything
- The drumming is so well performed here
- The ending is ... like what? I could have listened for an hour or two of this song alone -- really, I feel this way when I heard your tune.
- NOTE: three full listens in a row and I cannot stress enough how incredible this tune is.
- ADVICE: You could play this song for 9 minutes during a live show and no one would want you to stop.
- Musicians often hear another's work and they say to themselves - "Why can't I write/perform/record this well?" -- many musicians must be saying this about you guys.
- The lovely bending notes in the solo fills are nice touches
- Wow.

Score: 5.0 -- (5)

"It's On You"

- Almost old west feel to the intro - creates a unique mood to the tune

- This track has grown on me - wouldn't use it as a single, but It'd make a great live rocker...maybe closer ... yeah total live rock-out
- another clinic on how to sing with this song. You have a brilliant way of singing. Your voice, like the band itself, is pure star. No B.S.
- chorus has definite catchy lines "don't know how they're creat-ed" <- nice vocal delivery
- around 4:02 the backing guitars really shine with a killer backing riff that echos out a sweet groove
- Hard edged, long rocking ending -- the FX at the end w/ audience are nice touches
- The tune really make a dent after each listening. I like when an album have immediate hits, grow on you hits, and variety. This is another "fan - fav. if not immediate hit.

Score: 4.3 -- (4)

"Kids"

- Sounds too commercial - or what I think a record company thinks I want to hear
- played well and nothing to complain about musically or vocally
- comes across to me as a bit preachy - not commenting on the message, just not what I'm looking for in my rock music
- Even on additional listens I cannot get into this tune. - not a bad tune -- just not for me (a rare thing w/ your music)

Score: 3.6 -- (4)

"Lucky"

- Great backing vocals - and lead vocals
- Drummer knows how to create his beats & bassist knows how to keep it moving
- My opinion on this tune is that it's a well made tune, but not a single
- feels right on this album, though,
- backing keys at 1:18 sounds almost like "magic rain" -- not chocolate rain ;) -- a nice touch
- this tune creates a good mood and has really good elements, but definitely not a high point -- IS NOT a low point though, I stress this
- This tune moves and grooves in it's own way - fits on the CD, but not the "greatest hits"

Score: 3.9 -- (4)

"Illumination"

- really nice soft vocals

- nice use of backing keys
- the guitars come through the mix very nice
- a nice slow tune
- not a single, but a very nice tune
- adds a softer touch to the CD as a whole

Score: 4.1 -- (4)

"Watch You Breathe"

- Good rocking track that have groove and solid production (as always) -- I'd like to hear what the live version sounds like...
- nice tempo changes
- Good backing ?keys guitars?
- "Sleep and Watch You Breathe" has a great 'creepy' undertone to it -- very good mood
- vocal FX atv ?2:50 work well
- Bass around 3:40 -- good stuff
- the simple, but well constructed breakdown/solo near the end of the song is a great composition
- not a single - still a cool track
- outro soloing sounds great with the other instruments
- love the fade out on this track

Score: 4.0 -- (4)

"Heroes turn to Thieves"

- pulsing intro works well with that low vocal delivery
- the guitar picking adds to the overall effect and then the verse soloing seals the deal on the opening
- more great drumming and solid bass give this tune some strong backbone
- a well made tune
- not a single IMO, but a great track to have before the end of the CD

Score: 4.1 -- (4)

"Vultures After Dark"

- the riff has such a sad "come listen though" feel to it -- I like it
- That "beach boys-esque" sound returns on the backing on this track - A good thing
- An interesting choice for the last track on the CD, it works though
- 2:54-ish gets a nice temp change w/ cool soloing
- the guitar soling here has a great "quality" that is so 90's pure rock that I love - very nice

- Again, not a single, but a solid tune for the CD

Score: 4.0 -- (4)

HIGHLIGHTS & OVERALL: The entire first half has HIT after HIT. The second half is a solid collection of LP tracks, each with their own unique quality and essence. Add the first six tracks from this LP and all but the first track from their EP and you're looking at a greatest hits compilation. This band has all the skill, style and delivery to make a definite impact on the music scene. Of course, by impact I mean miles wide crater. The best independent band -- ANY BAND -- that I've grooved to in years. Echofission has everything it needs to succeed (and thrive) but the label to spotlight them. If I don't hear these songs on the radio within 12 months it will be a sad statement on the inability for radio stations to realize the talent under their pretentious noses. I count myself lucky for the opportunity to review and appreciate this fantastic statement of music.

Echofission "The Straights" LP Score 90/100 (based on a thirteen song album) -- basically a division of the song by song score and the highest possible score (again song by song)

** this is in my opinion an incredible score - especially considering the number of tracks and "hits" **