



Side FX

Contradictions

Side FX may be independent, but their quality standards and creative ambition transcend their current place in the music industry. Two decades ago, Side FX would have been immediately scooped up by a major label, with lead singer Kim Cameron's soothingly sensual vocals on par with the finest female rockers of the era. However, don't classify Side FX as retro for even a minute. Aside from the '80s New Wave mood swings of the opening track "Scattered," Side FX clearly belong to the 21st century. While their songs eschew the avant-garde experimentation or clever quirks of the indie scene, they nevertheless challenge the pop status quo with seemingly effortless eclecticism.

Cameron's steady, flexible voice is the thread that unites the dizzying stylistic range of the album. Dipping into dreamy melancholy on "Scattered," Cameron reaches inside for the bluesy eruption of "Her Escape" and then settles into a bittersweet jazz delivery on the piano-laden "Come a Little Closer." The songwriting on the record is out of time, rallying against the blank-headed stream-of-consciousness of much of today's college rock, and aiming to evoke honest and clearly defined emotions. Side FX shift colors like a chameleon's skin, embracing funk, reggae, and Americana as well. The overall result is like purchasing several CDs for the price of one; however, the main difference is that there aren't any stinkers on any of them.

Side FX: www.sidefxband.net