

The Complements

welcome to



REVIEWS OF "SOMETHING LIKE HAPPINESS"



(Full text follows the quotes below)

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(NOW MAGAZINE)

"...topped with strong singing and tight vocal harmonies...A very promising debut."
(PENGUIN EGGS)

"...collects five originals that are definite gems, whether you base your criteria on songwriting or performing."
(BEING THERE MAGAZINE)

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(SOUL SHINE MAGAZINE)

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(CDREVIEWS.COM)

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Writing the perfect pop tune that puts across a message in under four minutes while keeping to the three-chord, verse-chorus-verse formula isn't as easy as it seems, and pulling it off without sounding like corporate schlock or AOR dreck is an even greater feat. The Complements never cross that line – their EP bristles with tight harmonies and solid accompaniment, courtesy of musicians like Mark Kelso, John Dymond and Steve Klodt, who've played with everyone from Pete Townsend to Shania Twain. Kevin Zarnett and Nurit Suzana are the band's nucleus, trading off on lead vocals in songs about coping with the end of a relationship. Don't worry – their strong writing avoids the sappy clichés that bogs down lesser breakup discs. The Complements launch their CD at the Rivoli Wednesday (February 2).

BRENT RAYNOR

[PENGUIN EGGS | SPRING 2005](#)

Toronto's The Complements are main vocalist Nurit Suzana and co-vocalist/songwriter/guitarist Kevin Zarnett. This five-song EP, is a jangly-rootsy-pop affair reminiscent of the Byrds with maybe a bit of Blondie and the Jayhawks thrown in for good measure.

The studio musicians including drummer Mark Kelso (Pete Townsend, Shania Twain), bassist John Dymond (k.d. lang, Bruce Cockburn), and keyboardist Steve Klodt (Amanda Marshall, Jeff Healey), contribute a highly polished and solid backbone which is topped with strong singing and tight vocal harmonies. Noted indie singer-songwriter Gregg Lawless's production gives the songs a radio friendly feel without going too far into MOR-dome. A very promising debut.

TIM READMAN

[BEING THERE MAGAZINE | FEBRUARY 2005](#)

Growing up outside of the cultural epicenter that is Toronto, I've grown quite cynical about what my suburban vicinity has to offer. When it comes to restaurants, music, movies, shopping, and just about anything, downtown Toronto does it bigger and better. When you're downtown, you feel inspired to create and soak everything up. It's just not the same when you're surrounded by picket fences and SUVs.

It is with pride, then, that I introduce our readers to a wonderfully talented folk-pop duo called The Complements. Like me, Kevin Zarnett (songwriter/guitarist/vocalist) and Nurit Suzana (vocalist) grew up in the suburbs of Toronto. Clearly they found inspiration somewhere, because *Something Like Happiness*, their debut EP, collects five originals that are definite gems, whether you base your criteria on songwriting or performing.

Kevin and Nurit seem to bring much different things to the table, and this is precisely what makes their sound so effective and interesting. Kevin's voice is undeniably one of a folk singer - melodic but gritty, clearly passionate about the

words he is singing. Nurit's vocals are angelic but powerful, and tracks where she sings lead are a nice break from Kevin's vocals. The vocals are at their best when the two harmonize, particularly on tracks like "Just Another Sad Song."

Of course, none of this would matter if it weren't for the strength of Kevin Zarnett's songs. These songs recall many things, both musically and lyrically. The classic compositions of groups like The Byrds and Simon & Garfunkel immediately come to mind when listening to the EP, as do more recent groups like The Jayhawks and Blue Rodeo. The album begins with "Sweet Sorrow," a slick combination of acoustic rhythms and 12-string electric guitars that instantly recall Roger McGuinn and Tom Petty.

The title track "Something Like Happiness" is a radio-friendly folk-pop gem, complete with a catchy chorus that you will find yourself singing along to in the shower. Another notable track on the EP is "Valley Green," a song that is both nostalgic and reflective, recalling the Kinks classic "Village Green." Musically, however, it is more evocative of the rich tapestry known as Americana.

But 'generic' or 'formulaic' are not words that come to mind when I listen to The Complements. By combining very different male and female voices they have found originality in a genre that has had many effective practitioners. I honestly cannot think of another male/female duo that has so effectively delivered the kind of sound and vision that The Complements seem to offer. Indeed, Kevin and Nurit certainly "complement" each other.

I suppose the true test for The Complements will be whether or not they can follow up Something Like Happiness with a full-length release. But for now, this sampling will leave those listeners with a taste for melody and lyric with something to enjoy and share with others.

ADAM D. MILLER

[SOUL SHINE MAGAZINE](#) | FEBRUARY 2005

Richmond Hill, Ontario, has a hidden gem in The Complements. Nurit Suzana (vocals) and Kevin Zarnett (vocals, guitar, and writing) don't go for the sappy folk duo. Suzana's richly woven harmonies with Zarnett flow with the completely danceable "Something Like Happiness", and glimpses of a young Dylan are evident on "Just Another Sad Song" where Zarnett's vocals find solace. The songwriting also maintains center stage with catchy choruses and thoughtful insight.

LINDSAY WHITFIELD

[CDREVIEWS.COM](#) | JANUARY 24 2005

True to their namesake, The Complements are a Canadian duo comprised of Kevin Zarnett and Nurit Suzana whose contrasting vocal styles complement one another. It is not just the fact that the female and male vocal arrangements are

created to contrast, but Kevin's range is similar to the countless singer-songwriter making the rounds these days. That's not a negative thing; there are plenty of male singers making a modest living. But what works for The Complements is bringing Nurit's incredible female voice to the forefront on a handful of songs and letting the compositions use her vocals in the background as a perfect complement to Kevin's vocals.

The first track, "Sweet Sorrow" is an ample introduction with Kevin handling lead vocals. Nurit serves as backup vocals but it is a Kevin song. What works for this duo is that like fellow Canadian folk rockers Chris and Kate (also a female-male duo), is that the listener is treated to a variety of styles that doesn't turn an album's worth of tracks into tired and standard singer-songwriter fare.

"Sweet Sorrow" is followed by the album's title track, "Something Like Happiness." Nurit takes the reign on vocals on "Happiness." I especially dug the Hammond organ included in the song. Not until the third song, "Just Another Sad Song" does the phrase "complement" really come to light. Though Kevin is at the helm for this song, Nurit's background vocals are complementing Kevin perfectly.

The last two tracks are Nurit driven tunes. "Valley Green" plays like a modern day Joni Mitchell updating of "Both Sides Now" followed by "Beautiful Mistake" which is simply a beautiful way to end the EP. The Hammond organ once again makes an appearance but it is Nurit's vocals that shines in the song. Not to leave Kevin out, but I can't hear too much of his voice, which for this song doesn't need any extra vocals. However, the lyrics for the song are great, highlighted by the phrase, "If I'm going to crash and burn, I'll do it on my terms."

The tone of the disc reflects the attitude one experiences after a bitter breakup, namely feelings of inadequacy, heartbreak, and bordering on desperation. Kevin serves as the group's primary songwriter and he eloquently encapsulates those feelings into four minute morsels (some credit goes to producer Gregg Lawless and musician Dave Taylor as well for songwriting). Better yet, Kevin seems to understand that by inclusion of Nurit's female vocals, the bitterness seems to become songs of hope and become "something like happiness."

BEN MONTGOMERY

