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music review

crystal kotow

Local band, Eye of Charm, recently released their 10-track debut album, *The Goddess Mira*. While retaining an alternative-rock sound, the tracks are pumped full of inspirational lyrics, captivating keystrokes and rhythmic drumming that lends an almost mystical quality to the music.

Based on the premise that sometimes the world passes you by, songwriter and lead-vocalist, Joe Byrne Jr., focuses on individual uniqueness and how we can achieve it simply by relying on ourselves and our own resources. The signature track, *Farewell Machine*, is based on this premise. Not giving up when you've been knocked down is one of the main messages the song conveys.

The alternative ballad, *Released*, is the sixth track on the album. Its calm mood showcases

The Goddess Mira offers inspiring, thought-provoking sound

Davor Jordanovski's keyboard abilities while the lyrics give expression to the idea that as we grow we're never alone. The message is that every person we've met over the course of our lives has contributed to our emotional and spiritual composition.

The band also includes Rick Marchand on drums and Jen Verbeek on bass and back-up vocals. The group considers Essex as its operating base. Byrne Jr. is from Lakeshore, Verbeek is from Essex and Marchand is from LaSalle. Jordanovski, originally from Macedonia, now lives in Toronto.

Depending on which track is playing, Byrne Jr.'s voice is a cross between Billy Corgan of the Smashing Pumpkins and Liam Gallagher of Oasis, yet still somehow retains a unique quality.

Although punk, post-punk and emo-alternative bands seem to rule the airwaves, seldom will the listener think, "this has been done before". *The Goddess Mira* brings more mature listeners

back to their roots by conjuring thoughts of hanging out with friends while listening to bands like Collective Soul or Radiohead.

Byrne Jr. and Jordanovski are currently on a media tour in Europe until the end of August. Eye of Charm is in the midst of organizing a mini-tour, which will cover most of southern Ontario, Winnipeg and, they hope, the U.S. college circuit near the end of the year.

For a debut album, *The Goddess Mira* delivers a sound most listeners will enjoy. It's never too hard rock to bear and it doesn't cross the line that separates alternative ballads from sappy song writing.

It's recommended for listeners interested in music that sets itself apart from mainstream bands screaming about anarchy or whining about lost love. The album will be in stores including HMV and Music World by Sept. 1 and, at \$13.95, it's one of the most affordable ways to support local talent and be aurally stimulated at the same time.

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