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# Entertainment

## Jenn Grant

### Orchestra for the Moon

*By Anne Herteis*

Her name and voice have been recognized by East Coast independent music lovers for years, but recently Jenn Grant and her new band The Night Painters have been receiving national mainstream attention for their album *Orchestra for the Moon*. The PEI-born and Halifax-based singer-songwriter has been interviewed on the CBC, recorded with Ron Sexsmith, opened for Feist, and most recently commanded the whole cover and a six-page story in Halifax's *The Coast*. And now that the album has been officially released, after a sweet and personal yet packed concert at Queen Elizabeth High School in Halifax on April 27, *Orchestra for the Moon* is proving that it lives up both to its publicity and to Jenn's previous recordings.

Fans of her 2005 EP, *Jenn Grant and Goodbye Twentieth Century*, will not be disappointed by her first full-length recording. Her new work has much more edge and a greater variety of musical style and

instrumentation than earlier offerings; instead of the acoustic guitar, drums, and occasional ukulele of the EP, *Orchestra for the Moon* is powerfully and expertly backed by a full string section, flute, keyboards, and even a music box. The result is an album that sounds full, resonant, and professional without compromising Jenn's trademark lo-fi, unpractised style of vocals and guitar. Diehard fans of *Goodbye Twentieth Century* may be surprised by the new mixes and instrumentation on "Don't Worry Baby" and "Make it Home Tonight," which certainly make it difficult to sing along, however new listeners will have nothing to complain about, and the songs stand to become favourites.

The two previously released singles "Dreamer" and "Britt n' Kip" along with track four, "Unique New York" are the most upbeat of the album's thirteen tracks. They are heavy on drums and bass and show a rougher side of Jenn's usually sweet and sometimes childish voice. The rest of the album is slower, instrumental, personal, and introspective. "In a Brown House" is a beautiful tale of childhood and love and is one of the album's most moving songs despite the negative impact of some poor backing vocals. The standout song on the album is undeniably "Dancin' in the Wind." A slow starter (which featured Jenn's goddaughter dancing on stage to a music box during the live performance) the song quickly moves from the quiet opening into a beat-driven dance number with inventive and effective instrumentation and a signature sing-along chorus.

Each song on *Orchestra for the Moon* tells a different story, and the variations in tempo, instrumentation, and the subject matter of the lyrics work together to create an album which is coherent and well produced. While Jenn's signature "oooo's" and multiple vocalizations may become monotonous, the songs and lyrics won't. Jenn's voice and lyrics mix with her orchestra to create the perfect blend. Each song is unique and the album works as a well thought out package.

RATINGS 4/5

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