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WOMAN'S HOUR (UK)

Album: «Conversations» (Secretly Canadian, release: 11.07.2014)



Woman's Hour are not your average band. The first clue comes in the name of the London-based swoon-pop four-piece, taken from a beloved female-focussed news and culture show on BBC Radio 4. The second is in their graphic, striking monochrome visuals, meticulously curated in collaboration with TATE and MOMA certified fine artists Oliver Chanarin and Adam Broomberg.

On their excellent debut album «Conversations», this has the intricate construction and intimacy of The XX and the iridescent shimmer of summer-defining indie pop. Pay attention now, or regret it later.

<http://www.womanshour.co.uk/>

«In a sense, we feel like the odd ones out», explains frontwoman Fiona Burgess of their nose-to-tail approach to their visuals, performance and songcraft. «It's quite empowering that we're doing it as four people but we're not part of a bigger collective.» Indeed, their 360° approach is closer to the art/music crossover of acts such as Throbbing Gristle, Yoko Ono or Factory Floor than most of this year's indie hopes. Their music – as poignantly personal as pop gets – has a rare singularity and purpose.

Perhaps Woman's Hour's music does not hammer its message home, but there's a nuance and craft that's scarcely found in today's industry. They followed «Our Love Has No Rhythm», with the cooing, Beach House-esque «Darkest Place» in which Fiona implores «I don't understand why you're not around» over swooning keyboards, with a cooing «ooooh-ooooh» hook. For the track's striking video, she'd is depicted in close crop with her eyes closed as an unknown figure attempts to prise them open. «I was finishing a degree in performance studies at the time, and I came across this particular piece by Vito Acconci», she says of the inspiration for the video.

Woman's Hour have an uncompromising commitment to the unconventional. For them, music does not exist as merely a hummable soundtrack but as a wider and more artistic proposition. As Fiona explains: «A lot of music videos are not very challenging, and I like the idea of them being quite confronting. Our album artwork is inspired by a picture of a woman surrounded by pyramids that was part of a magazine article called The Start of an Era. It was a 1970s performance piece that was performed at the Whitney Museum in New York, and we've also designed nine of these pyramids with Oliver Chanarin that we'll incorporate into our live show when possible.» The Start of an Era? We couldn't have said it better ourselves.



Members:

Fiona Burgess
William Burgess
Nicolas Graves
Josh Hunnisett

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Place du Nord 7, 1005 Lausanne
Geroldstrasse 33, 8005 Zürich
www.irascible.ch

Promotion:
Cristina Vega
044 271 32 83 / 84
cristina@irascible.ch