

## Morella's Forest: Noise with Poise (edited)

### Morella's Forest: noise with poise

All too often, the CCM scene seems to be densely populated with run-of-the-mill mainstream pop and derivative straight-ahead pop rock. On the contrary, Dayton's Morella's Forest, on the Seattle-based Christian indie label Tooth & Nail, serves a brand of abrasive yet warm

fizzle/noise pop à la My Bloody Valentine on "Lush of Spring" and "Curl" along with a dash of Cocteau Twins on "Fizzle Kiss" off their debut *Super Deluxe*. The album packs yin-and-yang forces of fuzzed-out noise melding with Sydney Rentz's honeyed vocals that float in the sea of grating, buzzing effects. Balancing the noise equation are Shawn Johnson's sparkly, shimmering guitars on the lullaby like "Oceania" that are also alternately sandwiched between bursts of distortion on "Glowing Green" and "Star Gazer." "Pasty White," off the *Hang-Out EP*, similarly starts with Sean McCorkle's hushed and pumping simple bass line, gradually merging into swirling, quivering



ing mad slide guitar riffs against the background of drummer Nate McCorkle's steady, aggressive pummeling.

From *Dayton With Love*, MF's third full-length effort, is a descent—or rather, degeneration—into candy pop territory. The band seems to have lost its edginess here, though those who find instant charm in radio-friendly hooks would consider this album a gem. Gone is the shoe gazing factor, yet its vestiges can be found in the notably driving tracks "Water's Overhead" and "Falling." MF trades in its fuzzy drone for bubbly New Wave synth wonderland on "One Glorious Night." While this instrumental novelty suits the style well, the ensemble of acoustic guitar and strings seems anomalous on the cover of Kim Wilde's "Kids in America."

On the whole, MF has succeeded in using catchy shiny-happy songwriting approach without cloying sweetness. Whether the band will effectively reinvent itself remains to be seen on *Tiny Lights of Heaven*, slated for release on August 25.

All too often, the CCM scene seems to be densely populated with run-of-the-mill mainstream pop and derivative straight-ahead pop rock. On the contrary, Dayton, Ohio's Morella's Forest, on the Seattle-based Christian indie label Tooth & Nail, serves a brand of abrasive yet warm fizzle/noise pop à la My Bloody Valentine on "Lush of Spring" and "Curl," along with a dash of Cocteau Twins on "Fizzle Kiss" off their debut *Super Deluxe*. The album packs yin-and-yang forces of fuzzed-out noise melding with Sydney Rentz's honeyed vocals that float in the sea of grating, buzzing effects. Balancing the noise equation are Shawn Johnson's sparkly, shimmering guitars on the lullabylike "Oceania" that are also alternately sandwiched between bursts of distortion on "Glowing Green" and "Star Gazer." "Pasty White," off the *Hang-Out EP*, similarly starts with Sean McCorkle's hushed and pumping simple bass line, gradually merging

into swirling, quivering mad slide guitar riffs against the background of drummer Nate McCorkle's steady, aggressive pummeling.

*From Dayton with Love*, MF's third full-length effort, is a descent—or rather, degeneration—into candy pop territory. The band seems to have lost its edginess here, though those who find instant charm in radio-friendly hooks would consider this album a gem. Gone is the shoegazing factor, yet its vestiges can be found in the notably driving tracks "Water's Overboard" and "Falling." MF trades in its fuzzy drone for bubbly New Wave synth wonderland on "One Glorious Night." While this instrumental novelty suits the style well, the ensemble of acoustic guitar and strings seems anomalous in the cover of Kim Wilde's "Kids in America."

On the whole, MF has succeeded in using catchy shiny-happy songwriting approach without cloying sweetness. Whether the band will effectively reinvent itself remains to be seen on *Tiny Lights of Heaven*, slated for release on August 25.