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# A.S. SET TO RELEASE 'EXILE'

POPPY BALLARD FEBRUARY 11, 2013 0



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Marking their second full-length release, *Exile* is the sensational new record from Paris based duo A.S.

The project of pianist Nick McRoberts and guitarist Idriss Halfaoui, A.S. have crossed both borders and genres with this record. Whilst it was written in Paris, with McRoberts working as an orchestra conductor at the time, the recorded album was later mixed in L.A. by Grammy Award winning engineer Darrell Thorp (Radiohead, Beck). Maintaining their pop/rock sound, A.S. incorporate other elements such as classical and folk, distinguishing themselves from other bands of this ilk. A fitting sequel to the band's debut *Intimate Circles*, *Exile* is a clear progression and refining of A.S.'s sound.

With McRoberts' skills as an arranger and composer, coupled with the talents of Halfaoui on guitar, *Exile* is an ambitious, expansive and ultimately triumphant record. The opening track 'Do What You Want' forms a perfect introduction to the album. Building from a neat piano hook, the song introduces acoustic chords, vocals and distorted electric guitar following neatly into the title track 'Exile'. With a somewhat eerie opening, 'Exile' works around a delayed guitar riff, adding strong beats and vocals delivered with true gusto from McRoberts. Seemingly, having felt liberated in recording this album, the creativity is clear throughout the record. The effected guitar riff in 'Fast' and the opening piano melody in 'Probable Cause' demonstrate just some of this. Managing to switch focus between piano and guitar across the album is outstanding. Elsewhere on the record the string sections are a real strong point and the moving between moods – anthemic right through to melancholic – is quite incredible.

Consequently, A.S. evokes a number of comparisons at different times on the record. In places, bands such as Coldplay, Radiohead and The National can be heard, whilst McRoberts songwriting and vocals are remnant of Nick Cave or Curt Smith (Tears For Fears) for instance.

*Exile* is set to be internationally released on April 15<sup>th</sup> through Australian label Inedible Records.

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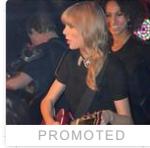
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