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Dear, Oh Dear



The Dears

Missiles

Dangerbird Records

by **Kevin C. Madigan**

It's gratifying to see a new **Dears** release, considering the band's recent implosion, shedding members left and right and now consisting of just head Dear Murray Lightburn and his wife Natalia Yanchak. Lightburn told **Toronto's *The Globe and Mail*** last week, "personally, I've had a really tough year this year. And professionally, it hasn't been easy either."

Evidence of internal malaise can be found in the song Demons which starts with the lyrics "There are demons around here/I ain't that stupid" repeated over and over. Things take an even darker turn in the title track and darker still in Meltdown in A Major, in which the protagonist appears to be encouraging a fellow sufferer's thoughts of suicide. "Most people say you're wrong/I know you're onto something" sings Lightburn, rising slowly to an eerie falsetto before concluding with an industrial barrage and an abrupt, disconcerting finish. Conversely, the final track Saviour paints the singer in a more benevolent light: "You'll have to forgive me/I'll make it right/I'll make it through/This time."

Strong stuff. Then again, we're talking here about a band whose best known album is called *Gang Of Losers*, so the preponderance of moroseness is not altogether surprising. Don't be put off, though, because the musicianship is superb throughout. Catchiest tune award goes to very topical Money Babies, with its irrepressible chorus of "Our money is elastic/Gotta get enough for the babies" sung in harmony by the pair. Viewing of the accompanying **video** is strongly recommended. One can only hope these two can keep it together long enough to make more records that are as good as this one.

Missiles, **The Dears'** fourth studio album, will be released by **Dangerbird Records** on October 21st and will be available at all self-respecting independent record shops.

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