

everything  
about the girl

After a 25-year hiatus, Tracey Thorn goes solo with exquisite results

It took 25 years for singer/songwriter Tracey Thorn to create a sophomore album to follow up her debut (*A Distant Shore*, released in 1982), and, as clichéd as it sounds, it's been well worth the wait. Sure, she's been busy the past two decades or so with renowned pop outfit Everything but the Girl (formed with husband Ben Watt), creating the chicest dance music known to man, woman and DJ (their hit, "Missing," charted for more than five years), but the U.K.-based vocalist's latest project sans hubby is an electro-pop masterpiece. Laced with Thorn's highly dramatic voice, her aptly named *Out of the Woods* is adorned with dance-floor diamonds such as "It's All True" and sonically lush tracks "Easy" and "Falling Off a Log." Although she is reclusive by nature (*FLARE* was one of the few publications in the world to interview her), here, Thorn opens up on her electro-fying life.

**FLARE:** Fashion designers are obsessed with futurism and technology. Do you think more people are now embracing electronic music? **Tracey Thorn:** Dance music is definitely still underrated. People don't appreciate its production values and how amazing [the songs] sound unless they hear them in clubs. Compared with [today's] crummy rock records, they are fantastic.

**F:** The song "Grand Canyon" tells a tale of someone escaping suburbia to get to the big city. Is it autobiographical? **TT:** Totally. I grew up looking down the railroad tracks in Hatfield, dreaming of London. It's about that feeling of a door of a nightclub opening, and you walking in and thinking, "All right, I've come home. I belong." The city opens its arms to people who don't fit into a small town.

**F:** EBTG hits such as "Missing" associate you predominantly with club culture. How important do you think nightclubs are?

**TT:** New fashion and ideas are perpetually

born there. People go to experience a physical and emotional communality there. It's a spiritual, communal experience that's missing from a lot of people's everyday lives. It's vital. There is such a church-going quality to it.

**F:** If you could choose a designer runway that you would love to have your music playing on, which one would it be? **TT:** Marc Jacobs, Paul & Joe and Eley Kishimoto. Some wouldn't even think I'm interested in fashion at all, but I just choose simple things to wear. I remember a concert review saying, "She came on wearing a plain vest and no make-up." That vest was by Gucci!

**F:** What has been the greatest compliment you've received? **TT:** That I sound younger on this record than I ever sounded before! I said to him, "The surgery worked!" —*Elio Iannacci*

HAUTE  
COUTUNES

A few tracks to put spring in your step

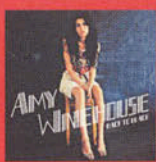
- ▶ "Morning Child" by 4hero
- ▶ "One Hell of a Party" by Air
- ▶ "Here in Your Arms" by Hellogoodbye
- ▶ "Black Mirror" by Arcade Fire
- ▶ "Sicily" by Youth Group
- ▶ "The Worst Taste in Music" by The Radio Dept.
- ▶ "Some Loud Thunder" by Clap Your Hands Say Yeah
- ▶ "Sunday" by Bloc Party
- ▶ "Tell Me" by Diddy featuring Christina Aguilera
- ▶ "You Turned My Head Around" by Dean & Britta



SOUND ADVICE



**MIKA** *Life in Cartoon Motion* Who's he?: a Beirut-born virtuoso who can melt Alaska with his voice **Sounds like:** funkier Freddie Mercury, an upbeat Scissor Sister, a rainbow of fruit flavour **You'll dig it if you like:** sugary pop songs that keep you singing and smiling all day (i.e. "Grace Kelly")



**AMY WINEHOUSE** *Back to Black* Who's she?: a British multi-octave soul singer with chops that make Joss Stone tremble **Sounds like:** a postmodern Martha and the Vandellas with a sour twist **You'll dig it if:** You love Motown and ballsy women vocalists who sing it like it is.



NORAH JONES PICKS:

**M. Ward's Post-War** "It's really beautiful. All the tracks are amazing. If you want a ballad, listen to the song "Post-War," but if you want a rockin' song, listen to "To Go Home"—it's a Daniel Johnston cover."