

R E V I E W S

Alvvays never disappoints

Formed in Toronto in 2011, Alvvays (pronounced Always) is definitely a newer contender to the indie pop/rock scene. With a smash hit self-titled first album peaking at number one on US college charts in 2014, it is no surprise that Alvvays's second album, *Antisocialites*, is a smash hit full of well done songs and poppy beats.

Antisocialites is quite different from Alvvays's first album. The production for this album has seemingly increased immensely, creating a completely different sound throughout the album. Riffy, rough, electric guitars have largely been replaced by more synthetic, dreamy tunes.

Lead singer Molly Rankin's vocals are put more in front than in Alvvays; the drums sound much with little to no effort, but somehow full of emotion at the same time.

The rhythm instruments in the song jangle along nicely with Rankin's vocals until they erupt into a controlled explosion of solos. Lyrically, it is a masterpiece; Rankin writes of failed relationships and self-reliance, both common themes throughout the album.

My personal favorite song on the album is "Hey." "Hey" mainly stands out in the album as it has a sound unlike any other Alvvays song,



with a quick bassline and extremely fuzzy rhythmic guitars and the processing of the song gives it a post-punk feel.

"Hey" feels like a montage of quick driving scenes, up until the bridge. The bridge quiets down the lead guitar so that only the rhythm guitar is playing and Rankin's most emotional singing on the whole album is put right up in your face. The track is also highlighted with melodious backup singing done via multi-track

recording, giving the vocals much more depth and clarity than an autotune backup.

"Plimsoll Punks" is another stellar track, and a perfect example for New Age dream-pop sound. The guitars really pick up rhythm compared to the tracks preceding it. In traditional dream pop fashion, the chorus is very repetitive but catchy, with rough rhythm and lead electric guitars.

A final great song on the album is "Lollipop (Ode to Jim)." It's another high energy track much like "Hey" that tells a great story of an LSD trip with a lover, singing "Alter my state to get through this date."

This album is truly one of the best dream pop albums to have come out in recent years.

The sound signature of the guitars is unmatched in recent dream pop, and adds a Mac DeMarco-like twang to much of the songs, while still maintaining a sound quite different from any Mac DeMarco track. This album is leaps and bounds ahead of Alvvays, with huge advancements in recording quality that make the experience of listening to such a great band much more enjoyable.

--Jack Rogers