Smash Palace - 7 (2010)



01 – Win it All

02 - How Can You Say

03 – Holding Out for You

04 – Human Kind

05 - All in Love is Fair

06 – Here it Comes Again <u>play</u>

07 - Bridge of Sighs play

08 - Dead End Street

09 - Somebody Up There Likes Me

10 - Secret Life

11 - Solo

Personnel:

Stephen Butler (vocals, guitar, piano); DyAnne DiSalvo (vocals); Phil Rizzo (bass guitar); Greg DiDonato (drums).

The roots of Smash Palace lie in the great but short-lived new wave band Quincy, who put out a terrific major-label album in 1980 before entering into oblivion. Five years later, singer Brian Butler and his guitar-playing brother Steven resurfaced under the Smash Palace moniker, but their album didn't gain much traction either. Against all odds, Smash Palace released a follow-up 14 years later and have been active ever since. Having long ago sanded off some of the glossier, more overtly '80s-sounding edges of their sound, the Butler brothers have become proponents of a classy, catchy power pop style whose roots reach all the way back to the hook-laden tunes of Quincy, but bear an undeniably contemporary feel at the same time. The production on the band's 2010 release, 7, is crisp and clean, focused squarely on sharp-shooting guitar riffs and harmony-heavy vocals, with no superfluous sonic elements

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Written by bluesever Tuesday, 01 February 2011 19:37 - Last Updated Monday, 14 January 2019 00:17

standing between the listener and Smash Palace's unerringly tuneful compositions. While "Holding Out for You" boasts some rather Beatlesque chord changes, and opening cut "Win It All" has a sort of Cheap Trick/Raspberries momentum, the Butlers and company are not slavish imitators of retro power pop flavors -- rather, they offer up a mature but still frisson-packed variation on the classic power pop template, full of the kind of gravitas that only experience can bring. Though they sometimes sound like they could be peers of newer pop/rockers like, for instance, the 88, they do, after all, have their origin in another era. ---James Allen, AllMusic Review

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