

Magen Tracy & the Missed Connections

Long Fuse Burning

Major chords strummed over the simple beat of a waltz is an unassuming way to start a song, let alone an entire album. But like the slow sizzle of a wick attached to dynamite, “Is It Enough,” the first song on Magen Tracy & the Missed Connections’ new album *Long Fuse Burning*, marks the subtle quiet before the blast. What follows is the unapologetic, unabashed honesty of a woman no longer willing to mince words. As Tracy sings, “I like you a lot I might say. But I like a lot of people these days. And it’s beautiful when you don’t give a damn about anyone.”



This candor comes through in full force on songs like “Dirty Little Secret,” which serves up a gin-soaked, country-tinged flavor that recalls late nights and bad decisions, moving from cheeky to dark as Beach Boys–esque vocals wash away the grit to reveal an aching starkness. In “Color the Air,” which begins with an intro worthy of Roger Waters (add “adherence to genre rules” to Tracy’s list of “zero fucks given”), she demands honesty, even embracing the bitter taste this truth will reveal. Within all this wistfulness, there’s Tracy’s signature turn of phrase—wry, pointed aphorisms belied by their subtle and sweet delivery: “When I met you, we both said we were bad people. I remember thinking one of was right.”

Of course, not every song serves up such a bite. On “Move a Crowd,” the band gets a little help from songwriter and alt-rock icon Juliana Hatfield, her distinct treble voice lending itself to soaring vocals over a John Lennon–like chord progression—a fitting pairing for a track that offers a musician’s perspective on love, connection, and often heartbreak from the stage.

This self-awareness and assuredness—born from lessons learned, dues paid, and the sense that now, especially, is not the time for reticence—speaks to the heart of *Long Fuse Burning*. “When I went to name this album,” Tracy explains, “this idea seemed to encompass both the simmering rage I’d been feeling politically and socially in recent years and the careful growth and planning I’d been nurturing creatively as I grew from shy folk singer to confident side player in rock bands to a bold, self-actualized frontwoman.” The phrase comes from the album’s penultimate song, “Sweetheart,” an anthem about second-wave feminism: “I’ve got a long fuse burning with a brighter light. She said lean in, you’ve got another side. I’m a sweetheart, baby, ‘til they cross the line.” Inspired by artists like Jenny Lewis, Fleetwood Mac, and Lucinda Williams, *Long Fuse Burning* provides a musical portrait of what happens when you’ve been pushed too far.

An in-demand side player in the Boston rock scene (Juliana Hatfield; Hot Stove, Cool Music’s Band of Their Own), Magen Tracy had the opportunity to enlist some of her own favorite musicians, including Josh Kantor, Fenway Park’s venerable organist, as well as Tracy’s band; Stud Green (Humble Tripe), Tamora Gooding (Gene Dante, Axemunkee), Mike Oram (Abbie Barrett, Eric Salt, Cujo, Andrea Gillis Band), and Sam Spencer (Sera Del Fuego). *Long Fuse Burning* was produced by Ed Valauskas, with additional tracks produced by Craig Small, mixed by Pat DiCenso, and recorded at Q Division Studios in Massachusetts.

- Boston Music Award nominee for Video of the Year for “Color the Air” (2017)
- Boston Rock & Roll Rumble (2017)



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