

Metroland

The Capital Region's Alternative Weekly

September 14, 2000



For the last couple of years, Boston-based rocker Jennifer Tefft has been growing a local following for her guitar-driven pop-rock through semi-regular shows at Troy watering hole Positively 4th Street. So it's fitting that Tefft and her self-named band will celebrate the New York release of her third album, **SHIFT**, with a performance at Positively 4th Street tomorrow (Friday September 15th). **SHIFT** is bar far Tefft's most ambitious recording yet, the polished and impassioned disc was produced by Fran Flannery, who has worked with Creed, Aerosmith and Joydrop among others. Described by the Boston Globe as one of Beantown's "great, undiscovered secrets," **Tefft wins fans because of how her creamy, full voice rides over fierce rock grooves, putting her music on the heavier edge of the Lilith Fair spectrum even though it's accessible and radio friendly.** So if you've caught some of her previous gigs, or are curious to see why the singer has been embraced by local-music fans, head to Positively 4th Street this weekend and help Tefft launch **SHIFT** in style.

RECORDINGS

October 26th, 2000

Alternarocker, Jennifer Tefft, a Bostonian who regularly gigs in Troy, offers her sharpest recorded collection to date with **Shift**, a slickly produced effort that mixes her potent bar-band grooves with winning stylistic touches that hark back to '80's college rock. The songs on the disc are unmistakably modern, especially given that several of them use the soft-hard-soft structure crystallized by countless grunge acts, but their retro flavorings appealingly echo semi-recent musical history. The opening track "Painless," sets the mood by pairing a grinding but focused guitar attack with Tefft's clear, attitudinal vocals; while the number has an aggressive base, Tefft and her bandmates keep their angst in check so that their statement isn't muddled. The reserved approach lets the musicians straddle the worlds of amped-up noise and delicate production flourishes, so the style is nuanced yet still powerful.

Although Tefft is sometimes a little too serious for her own good, she never lets her downbeat subject matter get in the way of a good rock groove. With its blend of sliding acoustic guitar figures, alternately airy and crunchy electric guitar parts and chirping sci-fi keyboard notes, "My Own" has the album's most effective compromise between loudness and meticulous details; during the song's charging chorus, Tefft sings over several layered harmony vocals, creating an intoxicating whirl of voices, guitars and effects. "Control Freak," "The Only" and "Wrecking Ball" all burst with full-throttle energy, showing off the way that singer-guitarist Tefft, guitarist John Parrillo, bassist Jeff St. Pierre and drummer Phil Antonides are able to recapture nightclub adrenaline in the studio. The singer displays the gentler side of her persona in the bluesy "Fly Away," the Pink Floyd-flavored "Apology" and the album's lush closer, "Beyond This," but even these tracks have the balls-out fervor that has earned Tefft her club circuit cred. --Peter Hanson