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MUSIC REVIEW



A COLLISION
David Crowder* Band
Sixstepsrecords/ EMI
www.DavidCrowderBand.Com

Anyone with even a tangential knowledge of the Christian music industry should have at least some familiarity with the name David Crowder* Band. Their 2003 release, *Illuminate*, sold over 200,000 copies, an impressive feat in any music market. Their newest release, *A Collision* (Sixsteps records/ EMI), picks up where *Illuminate* left off. A more eclectic album than its predecessor, comparisons to *Ben Folds Five* and *Jimmy Eat World* can still be drawn, though not as clearly as before. *Collision* presents the listener with just that when it comes to musical influences, fusing electronica with modern rock, while sometimes throwing in a dash of Americana for extra flavor. The album starts with the slow, worshipful, piano-driven "Come and Listen," then moves along into a progression of modern-rock-flavored pieces typical of the "Nu-worship" movement.

Though these initial songs could comfortably fit into any emergent church setting, after a while, in the context of a rock album, they begin to sound the same. Almost anticipating this reaction, the album makes a temporary shift to a blue-

grass/revival instrumental "hoedown." You have to hear it to believe it, but somehow it actually makes sense in the flow of the album. It eventually progresses to songs like "Do Not Move," which sound like other "Nu-worship" bands such as The Violet Burning at their absolute best. The production work of Tedd T. (Delirious?, Mute Math) really shines on tracks like "Come Awake," which have a strong ethereal feel, reminiscent of bands like The Choir or Pink Floyd.

Debates about "What makes music *Christian*" aside, Crowder has always been one to embrace an "all of life as worship" attitude (Psalm 24:1; Colossians 3:17), and it shows on *Collision*. Musically, it can stand as a great release in its own right, yet lyrically there can be no doubt what message Crowder wants to communicate. He wants his listeners to learn to worship the Sovereign Creator in all aspects of their lives, not just on Sunday mornings. He communicates this without reducing his message to simple evangelical drivel. For example, "Wholly Yours" demonstrates his strong grasp of Law and Grace:

*. . . And you're covering me with your majesty
And the truest sign of grace . . .
was this
From wounded hands redemption fell down
Liberating man . . . but the harder I try
The more clearly I can feel
The depth of our fall
And the weight of it all . . .
You are Holy, holy, holy.*

Other songs, like "Do Not Move," poetically describe what goes through the mind of one who experiences God's cleansing grace: ". . . The costliest of costs/ The deadliest of loss/ The wonder of the cross/ The breath of life that stops/ The hope of heaven bought/ The wonder of the cross. . ."

The underlying theme for *Collision* is probably best summed up by the title track, which paints a picture of what happens when a transcendent God interacts with fallen

humanity. "Here it comes/ A beautiful collision is happening now/ There seems no end/ To where you begin/ And there I am now/ You and I collide/ Something circling inside/ Spaciously you fly/ Infinite and wide/ Like the moon and sky/ Collide/ Here it comes now. . . ." Crowder often closes his concerts by telling his audiences, "When our depravity meets his divinity, it is a *beautiful collision*." This release not only communicates that powerful truth with clarity and conviction, it also manages to express it with an artistic integrity that reflects a team of musicians doing what they do best, as unto the Lord.

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