

Measuring and Falling Instrumentation

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

17 Jun 2011

"Measured in Falls", the much anticipated second album from Cape Town's dark indie boys is exactly what one would expect from Ashtray Electric: mature, dark, and sombre lyrics sung in Andre's distinctly deep and enunciated voice, combined with large-scale sweepingly accomplished instrumentation and a rather self-restrained album design incorporating photographed DNA samples of the four band members. All combines to suggest a truly well-thought-out and intimately personal album.

As much as I like the angsty depressing songs, I feel this album would do much better without the inclusion of the first two tracks, which both come across as a bit self-indulgent. The third track, Tunnels, welcomes a slightly more up tempo sound, with a wonderfully heart-swelling chorus that will stay in your head for days.

Here Comes the Rain Again displays some lovely lead guitar mastery from Rudi-luscious. Very nicely done. As does Liar, with that wonderful riff, totally the winning element on this track. Liar, in fact, is a perfect distillation and combination of all the best parts of Ashtray Electric. I shall play it over and over.

Hit Stop is a beautifully sultry love song, gently caressing the listener. Eargasm of note.

When the Weather Changes is a soft winter song, perfect to listen to when the rain is a-falling and you're broodingly missing a loved one.

The bonus track, Release, featuring Afro-electro pop prince Gazelle is lovely contrast of deep and high, dark and pop; a surprising ending to this otherwise one-mood album.

"Measured in Falls" is in some ways incredibly neat and surgical; each element is precisely "measured" and considered, a careful layering of music and vocals that luckily, when wholly formed, becomes more than the sum of its parts. It's moody, incredibly honest, and only slightly pretentious.

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ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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