



# Reviews: Plaitum releases promising new EP

**Soren Spicknall**

WIIT MUSIC DIRECTOR

Barely 10 years into his career as a music producer, Paul Epworth can already be considered a kingmaker. He's been behind the board for the debut albums from Bloc Party, Florence + The Machine, Maximo Park, and more, and his ability to bring out new talent has also attracted the attention of established acts like Paul McCartney and U2, who have enlisted him for work on their respective most recent albums. And now, in addition to producing, Epworth has put his hand into another side of the music business, founding a new record label called Wolf Tone to promote and release music from groups he's personally discovered. Epworth exercised his influence with this new label by almost instantaneously making indie pop group Glass Animals international stars last year, and now he's set his sights on another such unknown group: Plaitum. The Colchester, England-based duo's first single debuted on Vice's Noisery blog, and their self-titled debut EP is due out on Wednesday.

At first blush, Plaitum seem to be following in the wake of Sylvan Esso's successful musical formula. Singer Abi Dersiley is backed by dark electronic producer Matt Canham, and their music is aimed squarely at the same EDM-influenced side of the independent pop spectrum that made groups like SE and Hot Chip big names in the last half decade. However, the tracks on this debut EP all have a denser, more heavily-layered feel to them than the relatively more manageable music of SE, a well-documented result of Epworth's involvement in an album. Additionally, Dersiley's vocals have a much less pointed role than that of SE's Amelia Meath, being used less for percussive structure than for melodies reminiscent of popular alt-rock modes of composition.

Canham's backing tracks are at times monumental in scale, but the art of the musical climax is not his only trick. The final song

snowscapes, depending on the listener's experiences with either. That track, "Sway," is perhaps the best from the EP, showcasing the

wise silky voice, and reaches its full throbbing power before the listener even realizes they've gotten there. These moments of intelligent, measured composition are what make Plaitum so different from their contemporaries in the field of pure pop, and are likely what will make this first EP a mainstay of independent radio.

That said, there are few weak facets to the release. Opening track and lead single "LMHY" demonstrates one of Plaitum's mild issues right off the bat, with drum tracks and initial synth tones that have been mainstays of pop music for at least five years now. While Canham's arrangements lend a lot of new territory to tried-and-true sounds, Plaitum can't escape the fact that anybody who's owned a cheap Yamaha keyboard or a Micro-Korg knows just how easy it can be to produce some of the layers in songs like "LMHY" and "Carousel." Going forward, it'll benefit the duo to bring in some more live tracks for sampling as a way of honing in on their unique sound, rather than drawing from a tool chest that's been used by every startup electropop act in this millennium. Additionally, while Dersiley's vocals are placed at a reasonable level in the mix, the listener needs to listen quite actively to gain any meaning from her lyrics, as the musical elements around her voice often take center stage, distracting any casual listener from her often poignant writing. Overall, though, Plaitum's debut EP proves that Paul Epworth hasn't yet lost a smidgen of his immense talent-finding abilities, and shows what can happen if a complete unknown is given access to the resources and connections of one of the most powerful figures in modern music. You can expect this release to be all over the place starting on Wednesday, and Plaitum likely have a bright future ahead of them. 7.2/10



Image courtesy of Plaitum

from the four-track EP is reminiscent of some sort of blend between alt-J and Cat Power, with low, menacing undercurrents evoking images of nighttime skylines or bleak, mountainous

duo's immense abilities without going straight for the obvious crescendo. It builds almost imperceptibly, interrupted by occasional interludes filled with distortions of Dersiley's other-

## Looking for a social science class for the spring semester? Try one of these new courses in Lewis College!

LCHS 285-01	<b>Science, Psychology, and Politics in the Atlantic Enlightenment</b> MW 10–11:15 a.m. Carolyn Purnell
LCHS 285-02	<b>Private and Public Life in the Eighteenth Century</b> MW 11:25 a.m.–12:40 p.m. Carolyn Purnell
SSCI 225-01	<b>Geographic Information Systems</b> R 10 a.m.–12:40 p.m. Hao Huang
SSCI 385-01	<b>Community and Economic Development</b> MW 3:15–4:30 p.m. Matthew Hoffmann
SSCI 385-02	<b>Demographic Models and Methods</b> MW 10–11:15 a.m. Christine Himes
SSCI 480-01	<b>Introduction to Survey Methodology</b> TR 3:15–4:30 p.m. Carol Emmons
PS 376-01	<b>Politics of Global Migration</b> TR 11:25 a.m.–12:40 p.m. Patrick Ireland
PS 388-01	<b>International Law and Organizations</b> TR 1:50–3:05 p.m. Aleksandar Jankovski

Additional information and course descriptions are available online (<http://web.iit.edu/registrar/registration/resources>).

These courses are open to all students and count towards the university's human sciences requirements.

Lewis College  
of Human Sciences  
ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

