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## Anemo - Pray

Mike Jennings



Brighton-based Anemo have launched their second album with: an angry, vitriolic single asking questions about the nature of war, violence and journalism with Pray. In the face of seemingly constant anti-war songs over the past few years – just look at Ian Brown, System of a Down, Eminem, Nerina Pallot, James Blunt, Green Day and even the Pet Shop Boys leaping onto the bandwagon, barely able to disguise their camera-honed disgust. You'd be forgiven into thinking that Anemo's latest effort is somewhat similar.

Thank god, then, that it's anything but. Sure, it's got anti-war themes, but it's rescued from falling into a particularly vacuous and mediocre camp thanks to the intriguing theme, gorgeous vocals and grinding, anthemic music that backs them up.

The track opens with Arabian-tinged vocals that echo the name of the track before launching into a stomping, foot-thumping, body-moving drumbeat courtesy of rhythm man Mike Kelly and a driving, tuneful bassline.

Lyrics are layered over the catchy music that, whilst still preaching about the war, manages to introduce an oft-neglected perspective to the genre – Pray is inspired by the true story of John Simpson, the BBC journalist almost killed on duty when accompanying US Special Forces. It's this unexplored territory that helps the single swim against the tide of anti-war drivel that seems to follow a similar pattern most of the time.

The chorus, then, explodes into a guitar-driven crescendo that effectively juxtaposes with the soaring, almost relaxed vocals of singer Hazelle Woodhurst. Beautiful melody fills the verses, too, truly highlighting the versatility of the front woman's voice, although the distorted group of vocals that make up the bridge before the climactic chorus does fall a little flat without the familiar harmonising backing these up.

It's still a great song, though, and an excellent advert for the new album, thanks to several things. Brooding bass, rhythmic drums and powerful guitars combine with a strong feminine vocal performance to create a single that, whilst firmly entrenched against the Iraqi war, manages to refresh the genre thanks for a new approach.

Released: 15/10/07

[Anemo Myspace](#)



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