



Nick Eng's melodies still hold true to his pop roots, while his new lyrics take a walk on the dark side.
PHOTO/ANDREA HEERDT

Long look

Nick Eng

Nick Eng, known locally for his upbeat, poppy and cheerful love songs, is writing from a different perspective for his sophomore album, *Long Shot*. While Eng still captures the spirit of 1960s British rock in the melodies of his songs, the album has a lyrically pessimistic perspective when it comes to romance and life.

According to Eng, there is no one true love song on this album, a jump from his self-titled first album, which contained tracks like “The One for You is Me” and “On Cloud 9.” Eng said that he’s been pissed off at the world and at romance lately, which has given him inspiration for the new material.

The opening track on the new album, “For Tonight,” begins with a powerful piano riff that pairs perfectly with Eng’s cynical lyrics about a relationship. The lyrics, “You’ve got me looking into your bedroom eyes/ And everything that I see in them cuts me down to size,” represent two people engaging in a relationship that isn’t going to be long-term, but rather only lasts for the night, according to Eng.

“It’s a one-night-stand song, loosely, or it can be about a person being with a person and you kind of know it’s not going to work out,” said Eng. “You’re not in it for the long term, unfortunately, but you can get a little something from each other for the evening, I suppose.”

He said the song is also about a toxic obsession and how a single person can take complete emotional control of your life, taking a toll on you—but, for the night, it’s fine, and you’ll let it happen. “You’ve got me running ragged and working up a sweat/ You’ve got me on a string, like a marionette,” Eng sings.

Eng doesn’t have anything against gooey love songs. In fact, he still enjoys cheerful songs, but he said it also feels good to get some darker emotions off of his chest with songs like “Too Good for Anyone.”

The song’s lyrics: “The only thing I do/ Is run around in circles chasing after you/ Ignoring all I said/ My messages to you all seem be left unread/ But you don’t even care/ You wouldn’t even be there/ And when all is said and done/ You’re just too good for anyone.”

Eng said this album was about taking risks with production, too. There’s eclectic instrumentation on *Long Shot*, and Eng said this collection of songs definitely feels more refined and fuller than his last album, which was recorded in more of an organic way, with random rattles and other background noise included in the record. Rather than just sampling the keyboard for piano parts, Eng said he mic’d up his parents’ piano to capture a fuller sound.

Every single note in *Long Shot* was written and recorded by Eng. He played every instrument himself and recorded the songs alongside his friend, Parker Hanes. Eng said he recorded the instrumental parts exactly how he wanted them to sound, then showed them to his band and said they can perform songs to their liking during live shows to mix it up and give their performances variety.

Long Shot will be released and performed live at The Potentialist Workshop, 836 E. Second St., on April 6, and the band will be going on a small tour in Sacramento and San Francisco this spring. *Long Shot* will also be available digitally on iTunes, Spotify and Bandcamp.

Nick Eng will be playing his new album at The Potentialist Workshop, 836 E. Second St., on April 6 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the door or on Eventbrite.com.

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