

Mp3 Leslie Nuss - Pop: Today's Top 40



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Pop, intelligent, uplifting, fun, sexy. 10 MP3 Songs POP: Today's Top 40, FOLK: like Joni Details: Throughout singer/songwriter Leslie Nuss' vast travels, she's found herself magnetically attracted to the fashion magazines plastered across airport newsstands, coffeehouse facades and hotel lobbies. The Chicago born artist (who's previously spent a residency in New York but since returned home) has always found the eye catching headlines, glossy covers and glitized up models to be especially intriguing, not necessarily at face value, but with an underlying sense of humor as demonstrated on the cover of her brand new self-titled endeavor. "I'm kind of paying an odd homage, but sort of poking fun at how they get caught up in trying to catch people's eyes with a twisted sense of reality," she shares. "I have a degree in design, and though the music is the most important element of the record making process, there's no reason the booklet can't be art as well." Those perusing the linear notes will not only be greeted by Nuss' provocative poses and outrageous headlines, but several pages of lyrics laid out in article format, along with a mock interview and centerpiece spreads. And just like the latest issue of Vogue, viewers can't help but lock their eyes on each image and soak up the content at hand. "I've always liked different types and fonts and the different layout options out there," Nuss explains. "It's sort of a reading of our culture, which mostly picks up information with their eyes first and then their ears. Why not incorporate that into a really appealing visual package?" Not only does the artist have her finger on the pulse of America's societal stereotypes with that perfectly pinpointed theory, but Nuss follows through just as solid in musical contexts. Spread across ten tracks, the acoustic guitar slinger offers an outpouring of personal observations, wry narratives and poetic prowess, evoking all the elements of a stellar project. The entire project was recorded in the Big Apple with an all-star behind the scenes cast, including producer Mike Shimshack, engineer Kyle Kelso (Tony C), mandolin and slide player Ann Klein (Joan Osborne, The

B-52's Kate Pierson) plus guitarists John Balicanta and Brian Spina and drummer Alex Smolinski (all from Epic/DC Flag act Lola Ray). Besides the ammunition of those key players, Sterling Sounds' Greg Calbi (known for his influential work with Bob Dylan, John Lennon, Bruce Spingsteen and David Bowie) mastered the record. In addition to the influence of collaborators, the recording environment also had an apparent impact on the lyrical infrastructure. Take for instance the appropriately titled "New York City," a track that wraps the city's most archetypical images- like scenic drives, strips of shops and taxi hopping- wrapped under a joyous romance. It's joined by the empowering "Blanket of Stars," which Nuss dually equates as a "thank you" to lifelong friends who've always stuck by her side and an anthem for any artist courted by an industry insider whose intentions go beyond a career boost. Resolution to her midwestern roots is provided throughout "I Was Not Made For This World," comically tracing the frustrations of day-to-day apartment life and a longing for home. "New York was just a different world all together than what I was used to, but sometimes that's what stretches you the most personally and as a songwriter," Nuss relates. "I remember being so sad when my landlord bought me out of my apartment over there, but it worked in my favor because I took the money and made this record!" Indeed that blessing in disguise also yielded colorful cuts like "He's Not Gay (He Just Doesn't Like You)," "If You Were My Boyfriend" and "What Do I Do To Make You Mine," all of which incorporate earthy organics with rocker girl instincts. They're joined by the sexually charged "Drive," which personifies passion with clever car metaphors and the graceful tribute to the songbird's aging mother "Setting Sun," riddled with emotional imagery and sonic delicacy. Though Nuss is hard to stylistically pigeonhole, fans of Lucinda Williams, Sheryl Crow and even early Liz Phair will likely fawn over this fodder. "I've been inspired by so many people, but in terms of female artists, probably the most by Sheryl Crow," she reveals. "There's a lot of rootsy pop/rock on the record. While we were making it, we talked about 60s surf up through Matthew Sweet. I think we really ran the gamut of so many different things- maybe even some English artists and some new wavey type things too." Aside from all the accomplished outpourings on LESLIE NUSS, the performer also has her share of past acclaim. Both her 1998 debut *Heliotrope* and 2001's follow-up *Action Hero Superstar* (both on Littleleaf Records) earned rave reviews, plus placements on several prominent prime-time TV shows. Nuss' single "Time Capsule" made it's way to a NBC's sitcom *All About Us* and a *Dawson's Creek* DVD, while "Fragile Flower" also landed on the latter program and the fellow DVD for *Significant Others*. (Most recently, two of the singer's songs appeared in the independent film *Indian Cowboy*). Add in

coast-to-coast performances, London appearances, plus opening slots for Julie Gold, Antigone Rising and Jill Sobule, and Nuss' appreciation base extends well beyond the windy city. "The plan is to stay visible and keep playing gigs around and out of town," she summarizes. "There's a process of rebuilding that comes with every record and the word is currently being spread once again. I would love it if some fashion magazines reviewed this and I want to get back to England again to play some more shows. You never know what's gonna happen, but there'll be plenty to keep me moving!"

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