

VOLUME Control

Music Review V 2.002

American High-Fi The Art of Losing

Island Def Jam Music Group

It has been a couple of years since American Hi-Fi's debut album, which earned it modest buzz and reasonable anticipation for a follow-up album. The band's response, "The

Art of Losing," was recently released on Island Records, and sadly falls victim to the pressures of sophomore expectations.

Blending pop/rock with a wannabe garage sound, it fails to present anything new or exciting. Another disappointment is the lead singer Stacey Jones' annoying nasal vocals, which leaves listeners wondering if he plugs his nose while singing. Some of the songs go off on tangents, borrowing power-pop choruses from 1980s bands, leading listeners to believe the

band still hasn't found its own sound yet. The band reaches a new low on the track, "Nothing to Lose," full of shout-along "heys" and "c'mons," and urging everybody to "holla back y'all."

It sounds suspiciously similar to the new TRL bands trying to cash in as Backstreet Boys with guitars. "The Art of Losing" probably won't produce any radio-friendly singles. With this effort, the guys from Boston prove to be little more than "The Flavor of the Weak."

Both musically and vocally, this band is capable of producing much better music, but it wasn't apparent on this CD.

★★★★★

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