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## Therapy? – A Brief Crack of Light



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One of the most infamous bands to come out of Northern Ireland in the last twenty years, Therapy?'s career has been varied to say the least, ranging from the highly commercial to the brutally obtuse, the unbelievably well executed to the utterly tedious. In recent years the band have definitely found a good balance and as a result have produced some really good albums, not least of which was previous album *Crooked Timber*, a fantastic record to see in the band's twenty year anniversary. *A Brief Crack of Light* isn't quite an album that matches its predecessor's calibre, though. The disc's main issue is a lack of real direction, feeling like an album without a solid aim. Instead it is a collection of random ideas that aren't entirely cohesive. Quite a few of these ideas result in excellent Therapy? songs – *Before You*, *With You*, *After You* almost sounds like early **Fugazi**, *Marlow* echoes some of the melodic ideas of *Crooked Timber*, and *Ghost Trio* emphasises the band's hypnotic guitars, grooving bass-lines and mesmerizing rhythms. But then there are trying and tedious songs like *The Buzzing* and *Stark Raving Sane*, which sound like incomplete b-side tracks from older albums. This lack of consistency is only increased by the differences in guitar tone, leading the album to sound like many different eras in the band's history at varying times. It is still Therapy? and still much better than some of the dregs in the band's more ropey history, but as a follow up to *Crooked Timber* it is a slight disappointment, albeit one with some key highlights.

Written by **James Donovan**

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