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Ceremony: A New Order Tribute

Publisher: **24 Hour Service Station**

Ceremony: A New Order Tribute is not a record that will necessarily create a ton of new New Order fans, although it is packed with some of the band's most popular songs. The cover bands aren't names that you've heard before, for the most part. **Ceremony** also won't be a huge hit with established fans of New Order, because the covers are often too literal, or take liberties with the source material that don't add anything especially meaningful. One die-hard fan commented, after I played her a few tracks, that she'd rather spend time listening to the original versions of these songs. The indisputable impact of **Ceremony: A New Order Tribute** is that sales of the album support a charity founded by Tony Wilson, a huge booster for the band.



Wilson's charity funds efforts to sponsor musically talented children, such as the pair of young girls that front the band Yes But No. These two sisters, age 10 and 13, do a fantastic rendition of the song "Ceremony," and there's a nice video of them rehearsing available on the record's Web page.

Most of the bands that contributed covers for **Ceremony: A New Order Tribute** are obscure, and sound like some bigger-name artist. Johnny Parry's cover of "Him" is channeling Leonard Cohen to the point that Cohen should be collecting royalties, for instance. XOXO is a dead ringer for Mojave 3, and most of the other bands seem to be striving to recapture a strong '80s sound with heavy synth and drum machine textures. Unique sounding and different adaptations of "All Day Long" and "World" are standouts, but the majority of **Ceremony: A New Order Tribute** tries hard to imitate, when it should have been striving to innovate. Considering the impact that New Order made on the music scene, and all the bands that could trace their influences back to the Manchester phenomenon, we expected more.

The motivation to create this record is coming from the right place, and it's easy to see why these bands signed up to participate. The potential for exposure is great, and the cause is a righteous one, but we really wished that a strong collection of musicians had gathered to cover these songs. Perhaps this will spark a renaissance, and spur more interest in New Order, but we worry about the potential for people to write off these songs based on their mediocre covers. Synthesizer love is spread liberally throughout **Ceremony: A New Order Tribute**, but it didn't deliver what we had hoped for, which was the kind of raw creativity that defined New Order and its predecessor band Joy Division. Almost everything on the record is listenable, and was clearly created out of love for what New Order represented in their day, and what Tony Wilson's charity is trying to promote today. Not to demean the bands that appear on **Ceremony: A New Order Tribute**, but both New Order and Wilson deserve a better shake.

-Fridtjof, GameVortex Communications AKA Matt Paddock

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