

# 'People Living' offers insight into human emotion

**Anna Reynal**  
Reviewer

For an album that covers a wide spectrum of human emotion, "People Living" is quite an appropriate title. From the softer sound of "In the Grey" to the politically charged "Revolution," Sam Fisher explores those emotions that seem to connect us to life.

The album opens with the upbeat "Inspiration Information," a cover of the original Shuggie Otis version. A rather cheerful song, Fisher uses this first tune to recognize his musical roots. And it is evident what they are: the song has a reggae-infused style, marked by syncopated rhythms and a light instrumental background to the lyrics. However, Fisher's own style shines through in the guitar riffs in between each of the verses and the chorus.

"Love on the Run" is another sample of Fisher paying homage to his roots. The song is filled with syncopated rhythms and intricate dissonances typical of jazz. Vocally, Fisher has a smooth quality that falls into wonderful scoops and slides that mirror the sounds of the instrumentals. Fisher uses fun, playful lyrics in this piece to tell the story of a particularly meaningful one-night stand.

Lyrics on this track like "Love ain't tender, love ain't kind/don't expect no piece of mind," are catchy, but at the same time will resonate with listeners.

On the opposite side, however, falls the ballad "Haven't Said Enough." Although it does not have the upbeat, fun tone that the previous two songs share, the more serious tone showcases Fisher's ability to put intense emotion into his music.

With a soul-like vibe and the lyrics, "Was it something I said to upset you/Was it something I said so wrong/Was it something I said/or a sign I misread/Please don't hang up/Cause I haven't said enough," Fisher pleads with the listener, making them feel the hurt and pain so commonly experienced in the trying times of a relationship.

Adding to the emotion is the increased sense of intensity driven by the increase in dynamics over the course of the song

"  
I'm just getting along, but my day is coming  
Now I'm singing a song that you know and love  
These days I stay dry even when it's raining  
I'm just counting on love to keep me alive.

—Sam Fisher, "Countin' on Love"

and the slowing of the tempo during the last chorus that emphasizes the hurt and desire present throughout the song.

But the point of the song is not sad; it is meant instead to remind listeners of the kind of love that takes over our hearts.

Other songs on the CD cover emotions besides love. "In the Gray" talks about commitment and figuring out where you stand. The tension that one feels when being "in the gray" is musically experienced in this song by minor chords at certain cadence points and throughout the song, and enhanced by smooth vocals that have a misty quality.

"Revolution" is quite the opposite, with its strong beat and feeling that encourages listeners to "take a stand." It has more of a rock attitude, mixed with a slight feel of funk and some nice guitar riffs, leading to

the end with heavier instrumentals and full guitar solos.

Probably the most widely known song on the album is "Countin' on Love," Fisher's first single. With a foot-tapping R&B and gospel feel, it is a rather uplifting tune that reflects on loss and how we deal with it.

Finally, the song "Say Goodnight" is also uplifting and hopeful, but for very different reasons. This song is very personal to Fisher, who wrote it to give peace to his mother after his younger brother died in a car accident.

"It was hard to sleep when everything was so quiet" after that incident, Fisher remarked, and the song was a "reflection," on this life-changing experience. The song deals with pain and loss, but leaves the listener with a sense of peace, saying, "I'm all right/say goodnight/You

can sleep now/I'm alright."

These lyrics are accompanied by a beautiful, soothing melody, without much tension from the instrumental accompaniment, sweetly serenading the listener and comforting the hurt places of the soul.

The key to Fisher's success on this album is the expression in his voice, awakening emotions in the listeners and using his lyrics to connect to them. With a variety of sounds and styles, Sam Fisher's "People Living" is a great debut album that has a little something for everyone.

Contact Anna Reynal at  
pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247

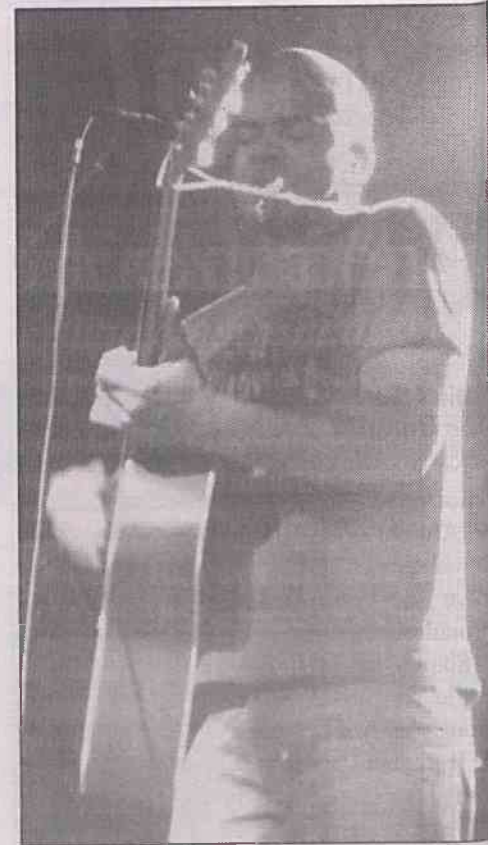


Photo courtesy of Sam Fisher  
Fisher will tour across America this fall promoting "People Living."

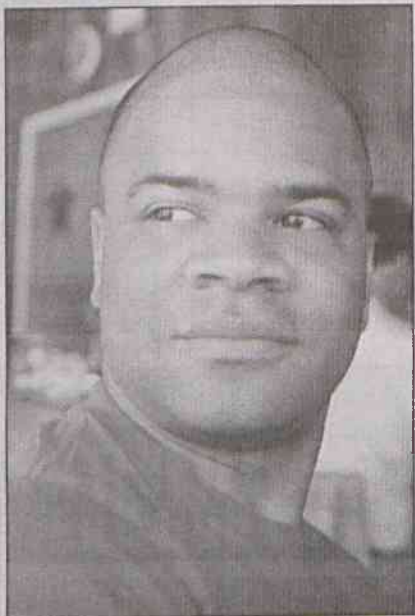
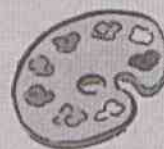


Photo courtesy of Sam Fisher

Sam Fisher performed at Elon Under the Lights during Orientation Weekend.



## In the Bubble



Monday, Sept. 11  
Art Department Faculty Reception  
Opening Reception

Elon West Gallery and Isabella Cannon Room  
5-7 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 13  
Richmond Ballet  
"American Masterpieces of Dance"  
McCrary Theatre  
7:30 p.m.

Thursday-Sunday, Sept. 7-17  
Judgement at Nuremberg  
Community Theatre of Greensboro  
8 p.m. Sept. 7-9, 13-16  
2 p.m. Sept. 9, 10, 16, 17