

Review of "Anatomy of a Coup", Anthony Worman, host of *Global Warming*, WCUR 91.5 FM

I'll acknowledge right off the bat that this album is not going to get a lot of radio airplay. It distances itself with incomprehensible vocals and experimental, meandering songs structures. Actually, it's quite similar to Sigur Ros in that sense. Come to think of it, the only major differences from the Icelandic hoperockers are that Sacha Silva sings in a different variety of incomprehensible languages and the band's instrumentation is much more dynamic. The same soft, beautiful subtleties remain, but the songs are a lot shorter!

The more the Sigur Ros comparison grows, the more it seems like Sacha is an accessible version of them. However, Silva's album won't get airplay because the foreign language the band sings in are too obscure, and the instruments too alien. True. It's far from pop-friendly, and those who listen to it won't get it because it's so easy to overlook the treasure inside when Silva's Indian-sounding wails can trigger a quick genre-based dismissal.

But none of that changes the fact that this album, *Anatomy of a Coup*, is a hidden jewel. The inspiration for all of the songs comes from a military coup in Fiji. This backs the album with a certainly felt message about the military force. Track 02: "the circle" kicks off the album with a percussive build that resembles a soldiers' march. Spoken word recordings, sometimes in English, sometimes not, are sprinkled throughout. This also gives the music a sense of urgency in its message.

As for the overall sound, it's another one of those melting pots that acclimate so many different cultural roots into a single sound. Yet all of Silva's influences blend so perfectly that it'd be difficult for some ears to decipher this. Sacha Silva is a Canadian-born of Sri Lankan and Bulgarian descent who has studied both flamenco guitar in Spain and Indian classical music in Delhi. When this is known, it all shines through with incredible clarity. Track 05: "awakening" seems to borrow a lot from sitar ambience without evening having one in it. Track 03: "free" is even more Indian-feeling throughout, but climaxes 3/5 of the way through, settling the final 2 minutes in a vividly Indian-Arabian fashion (strings, ceramic drums, and moaning). Track 04: "the argument" stands out as a triumph of blending influences: a Spanish flamenco guitar and beat gets integrated with unmistakable Indian strings halfway that carry the song until the end.

The originality and the awe of Silva's composing definitely makes the album more listenable as art, not to be heard on pop radio. The blend of sounds on *Anatomy* are rich. Silva successfully explores with each song, but does not waste any time. Unfortunately, it is not popular, it is not catchy or danceable, and it is already marginalized as "World" music. Its sound also leans toward ambience. None of this is going to make anyone reach out and grab it. Moreover, I assure you that what this band has put together is foreign but rich, traveled but unifying. It's sung in a foreign

tongue and separates itself from many musical standards, yet when listened to it makes so much sense.

SONGS: The tracks that caught me right away were Track 05: "awakening," with its classical Indian ambience, and Track 04: "the argument," which integrates Spanish flamenco guitar with the Indian sound so perfectly that it's easy to forget that the two forces are working together.