



## Breaking the Light

Nick Murphy (Cavalier/Shock) ★★★★★

Lucky for Melbourne lad Nick Murphy that his power pop/rock band the Anyones have taken an extended break. Free from the rigours of touring, Murphy has made a solo album of such scope and depth that the Anyones look one-dimensional by comparison. Murphy is obviously indebted to the Flaming Lips and their psychedelic forebears from the 1960s and '70s, and there is a wide-eyed hippie innocence about his lyrical outlook. "I feel elated by the magnitude of this creation / Boundless energies prevail", he sings on the opening track, *Elated*, above three-part harmonies by Jeff Samin (Musket), Ben Mason (Smallgoods) and Dave Ong (Joni Lightning). Murphy produced the album and played most instruments, recruiting guests such as Philippa Nihill (Underground Lovers), who contributes smooth, dreamy vocals on *Arrival*. There are some convincing country textures on songs such as the Simon and Garfunkel-like *Second Son*, which has rollicking fiddle by John Bedggood and pedal steel by Marcel Borrack, and the twangy *Can't Hear Your Whistle Blow*. This is, however, a pop album in the old-fashioned sense, a confident collection of impeccably well-written, sweetly sung songs that reveal a sensitive and perceptive musician's heart.

**SOPHIE BEST**