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SOUNDBITES

**AGNEE****Agnee****Sony-BMG; Rs 175**

Agnee's first Hindi album manages in parts to live up to the hype, delivering three outstanding tracks, before losing steam towards the end. The musicianship is excellent and the vocal interplay shows a level of sophistication that has so far eluded most Indipop acts.

Sadho re, which sees Sandeep Chowta collaborating with the band, is a great opener. A meaty guitar riff forms the backdrop for some haunting vocals. *Kabira*, which follows, has a more open country feel and the vocals really shine on this one, with un-

mistakable Sufi influences. *Shaam tanha* is liberally peppered with influences that immediately remind one of Sting's music. Subtle movements in the harmony give the song a languid vibe, with some excellent instrumental accompaniment.

However, after these three songs, the unchanging tempos begin to grate, and though some songs feature good guitar solos and thoughtful arrangements, it all sounds a bit forced. *Keh lene do* has its moments, but never really delivers on its initial promise.

Agnee has come up with a fairly good album in its genre. One only expects the band to step out and rock a little more next time.

Rahul Guha Roy