Alesha Dixon – The Entertainer (2010)

01. Alesha Dixon – Baddest Chick
02. Alesha Dixon – Radio
03. Alesha Dixon – Every Little Part Of Me (featuring Jay Sean)
04. Alesha Dixon – Take Control (Roll Deep featuring Alesha Dixon)
05. Alesha Dixon – Drummer Boy *play*
06. Alesha Dixon – The Entertainer *play*
07. Alesha Dixon – Colour
08. Alesha Dixon – Tug Of War
09. Alesha Dixon – On Top
10. Alesha Dixon – La La La
11. Alesha Dixon – Cool With Me
12. Alesha Dixon – Radio (Klaas Remix Edit) (featuring Wiley)

Trzecie studyjne, wliczając wydany sygnowany tylko imieniem album "Fired Up", wydawnictwo jednej z najbardziej lubianych gwiazd show-biznesu na Wyspach. Alesha Dixon promuje je przebojowymi singlami "Drummer Boy" i "Radio". Jak zwykle zawsze bezpośrednia, błyskotliwie inteligentna, uśmiechnięta i pozytywnie nastawiona do życia ekswokalistka Mis-Teeq zaproponowała słuchaczom smakowitą mieszankę popu i R&B, wzbogaconą o dance i hip-hop, z mnóstwem chwytliwych melodii, których nie sposób nie zanucić od razu po usłyszeniu. Przygotowując miksturę Dixon posiłkowała się wiedzą i talentem wybitnych ekspertów, wśród których byli: Stereoptypes (Justin Beiber, Ne-Yo), Toby Gad (Beyonce, Alicia Keys), Busbee (Katy Perry, Timbaland), Nate Walker (Jamie Foxx, Trey Songz), Kuk Harrell (Rihanna, Beyonce, Mary J. Blige). "The Entertainer" jest idealną ścieżką dźwiękową do radosnej zabawy, szczególnie na parkiecie. W końcu trzeba pamiętać, że tych kilkanaście znakomitych piosenek stworzyła nie tylko ceniona wokalistka, lecz również niezwykle utalentowana tancerka, zwyciężczyni i jurorka show "Strictly Come Dancing". Ona wie, przy czym najlepiej się tańczy.

The title says it all: Alesha Dixon isn't a pop star these days, but an old-school 'entertainer' with appeal across the mediums. Gifted a return to popularity via a winning turn on Strictly Come Dancing in 2007 – the ex-Mis-Teeq vocalist's debut solo album, Fired Up, flopped a year earlier – and a judging role on the show's past two series, this third album seeks to capitalise on Dixon's cross-generational appeal. But by attempting to tick as many boxes as possible, the team behind these 12 tracks have managed only a disappointing exercise in contemporary RnB mediocrity. The guests – Wiley, Jay Sean and Roll Deep – tell the listener everything they need to know about the musical direction Dixon's taken before pressing play. This is super-slick production processed through computers set to analyse the very widest demographics. It's RnB without any danger, no real passion from any of the protagonists. Everything's clean and clear, crisp and sharp, and utterly soulless. Dixon's a competent vocalist – the barks of her Mis-Teeq years are behind her, silkier tones taking the spotlight here. But never does a real character come through in her performances. She hits her marks, sure, but without a sense that she cares for the material.

Buried within the military percussion of Drummer Boy there's a great song that somehow escaped the clutches of Rihanna or Nicki Minaj – in the hands of a high-flying US vocalist it might well have charted higher than 15. The problem is that Dixon just doesn't sell the song – "I wanna feel it… harder, harder, harder" she claims, but she could be ordering a starter from a chain of family pubs for all the enthusiasm in her delivery. The title-track also takes cues from stateside would-be peers, its belching production delivering something that's remarkably absent elsewhere: some proper bass. A couple of weird interjections from a rambling male voice and it's a lost Timbaland work. Grammy winner Toby Gad can't turn Cool With Me into anything other than a half-hearted celebration of relationship release; meanwhile, fellow award-winning producer Nate Walka sleepwalks his way through Baddest Chick, the kind of cliché-riddled snooze-fest best left to blanker slates like Pixie Lott. There's ambition here, of that there's no doubt. And Dixon could yet be a pop force to be reckoned with if she was to rediscover the spark that drove those Mis-Teeq hits of the early 00s. With this slew of just-enough arrangements to play with, though, she never had a chance of reaching for the stars she once danced her way around so easily. – Mike Diver

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