



ELECTRO-SOUL DUO **NEW LOOK** BELIEVE IN A THING CALLED LOVE

"I started singing Christina Aguilera on karaoke when I was 15," purrs 23-year-old Sarah Ruba, before bursting into a fit of giggles. "No! I started with big band and swing jazz, a Frank Sinatra type of thing, before moving on to funk and soul." That's right, in between shooting Abercrombie & Fitch campaigns with Bruce Weber, the Toronto-raised Ruba fronts the Brooklyn-based future-soul pop duo New Look, alongside her husband, the 28-year-old multi-instrumentalist and producer Adam Pavao.

New Look was conceived in November 2005 under such romantic and vomit-inducing cute ideals that the heartbroken should stop reading right now. "I was in Seattle for a music conference and we had just started to make our first track the week before. We were so hyper about it that Sarah ditched a big modelling job and flew over," says Pavao. "We wrote that song and fell in love at the same time," adds a beaming Ruba. "The music and the love was this thing that we discovered together – all at once. It was like a huge epiphany and felt like a once in a lifetime moment. I had to explore it."

Using vintage gear from the 80s, New Look's sound is indebted to early Janet Jackson and Rick James's protégées the Mary Jane Girls, as well as the new electro-soul currently flourishing in Brooklyn. It's a scene of young creatives that includes close friends Machine Drum (the glitchy producer of Yo Majesty), rapper Theophilus London and producer/fashion photographer/artist Jimmy Edgar (watch out for New Look on his upcoming 12-inch "Function of Your Love"). Underpinned by a sparse 80s snap, New Look's new-soul works smooth Aphex Twin-esque ambience with sultry, synth-driven melodies that have a habit of breaking down mid-song into a freakout dance jam.

"I usually just start with a melody and hope that something really clever and ironic will come to me," laughs Ruba, explaining her lyrics. "I want to empower myself through music. We're inspired by art, fashion, design, acting... Holy shit, look what we can make out of nothing!" Their eponymous debut (initially titled *How's My Hair?*) will be self-released in early 2009. All that's left is to mention is the budget UK fashion chain of the same name. "I know!" screams Ruba. "It's so funny because I actually worked for them when I first started modelling. I'm over it. I just think New Look is a great name for a band. Fuck that store, man!"
myspace.com/newlooknewlooknewlook

Text Terence Teh / Photography Fumi Nagasaka