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reviewed by Courtney Price

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SO MUCH STILL REMAINS by JAMES EGAN

reviewed by
Courtney Price

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In case you were wondering, it is not too late. So come, my friends, and soak in an earful of sweet pianism brewed by local keyboard-banging singer-songwriter James Egan. *So Much Still Remains* is an eclectic collection of simple but memorable melodies blended together by rich and thought-provoking lyrics. One taste and you'll wipe the foam off your face and ask for a refill.

To explain the talent of Mr. Egan (for those of you still too hesitant to go to jameseganmusic.com and have a listen for yourselves) I can't stop myself from dropping the name Ben Folds. Both artists have many similarities: from knowing their way around a piano, to having nearly identical vocal cords, to writing songs about fictional characters that somehow exist in all of us. A prominent difference in Mr. Egan's collection is the lack of revenge Ben seems to be seeking in his latest album, *Way to Normal*. *So Much* seems to have a little more hope for humanity while exploring the quirkiness and conflict that makes us human.

The album's inspiration may interest lovers of litera-

ture. James doesn't exactly write from personal experience but from the experience of books he reads. When asked about his musical muse James responded, "Most of the ideas for this album came from a few of my favorite novels: *The Brothers Karamazov*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *The Heart of Darkness*. Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* was the catalyst for "The Things We Carry." There are plenty of other influences that it would be hard to exhaustively list. Basically, anything smart on my album is due to these books."

This album is not only enjoyable to listen to, but proof that English majors can do far more than merely edit their friends' papers. *So Much Still Remains* is a passport to explore things past written, things currently seen, things about to happen. On listening you'll encounter some homeless nuns and their view of the changing world, you'll meet a disconnected operator, and you'll find yourself humming "Worth Waiting For" just about anywhere you go. It's an experience all should have at least once.