

Dance-rock scenesters will probably never stop talking about "Losing My Edge," the first tune LCD Soundsystem ever released, even though the 2002 song ribs them. LCD mastermind James Murphy, however, has long since moved on.

Sound of Silver, his second album, is smart, wry and relentlessly catchy. It's a hypnotic collection of rhythmic textures with enough droll lyrics to engage your head while the pulsing music holds sway over the rest of your body. Guttural bass lines spit and growl under buzzing synthesizers, and shifting drum patterns drive the songs as Murphy lampoons provincial self-absorption on "North American Scum," or questions youth-obsessed people's desire to recapture "the feelings of a real live emotional teenager" on the title track. He ends with a mordant slow jam, the piano-ballad "New York I Love You But You're Bringing Me Down," but even that builds in urgency. So never mind what Murphy did five years ago—his Soundsystem is only getting better. —ED

FOR FANS OF:

The Rapture – *Echoes*

!!! – *Louden Up Now*

Gang of Four – *Entertainment!*



Low
Drums and Guns

[Sub Pop]

Talk about confounding expectations. On their previous album, veteran indie band Low scuttled its "slowcore" reputation in favor of a guitar-driven pop approach that drew praise from longtime followers. Surprisingly, the group's latest finds the Duluth-based trio returning to its old ways. Minimalist instrumentation,

screaming effects and glacial tempos abound, resulting in an over-arching style that comes off as a sort of outer-space amalgam of the Velvet Underground, Kraftwerk and *Another Green World*-era Brian Eno. Themes of alienation and dysfunction prevail, all framed in cold, brittle arrangements that are more like fragments than actual songs. Tracks such as "Dragonfly" and "Murderer" possess a haunting beauty, but memorable melodies are few and far between. Fans of the band's early work will find moments to savor, but others should approach this fare with trepidation. —RH

FOR FANS OF:

Galaxie 500 – *On Fire*

Codeine – *Frigid Stars*

Kraftwerk – *Ralf and Florian*



Stephen Marley
Mind Control

[Tuff Gong/Universal]

No one could ever fill the shoes of Bob Marley, and to their credit the reggae legend's vast

DVD REVIEW

Guns N' Roses: The DVD Collector's Box

[Chrome Dreams Media/Music Video Distributors]
LIST PRICE: \$24.95



Pity the poor Guns N' Roses fans. They were forced to watch their favorite band, the most powerful hard-rock outfit of its generation, slowly disintegrate throughout the 1990s until the only member remaining was charismatic lead singer Axl Rose. Since then, they've been clinging to morsels of information and the occasional leaked MP3 as Rose has labored endlessly over *Chinese Democracy*, the first album under the Guns banner since 1993.

To add insult to injury, these patient souls must see the void of actual GNR product filled by "unauthorized" substitutions like this. *The DVD Collector's Box* pairs a 2003 documentary on the group (*Sex N' Drugs N' Rock N' Roll*) with a 2004 doc on Rose alone (*The Prettiest Star*), neither containing actual Guns music or, for that matter, actual Guns members.

The former is a complete waste, offering only endless slow-motion stock footage of Los Angeles nightspots and interviews with a handful of '80s scenesters far outside the band's inner circle—alas, neither the tattoo artist who inked the cross on Rose's forearm nor a Tower Records employee who happened to be present when the band was in the store have any profound insights to impart.

The Prettiest Star fares better, boasting some intriguing home-movie footage and testimony from early Rose associates—perhaps just enough to make the package a worthwhile addition to the collections of the most hardcore Guns faithful. Everyone else is better off saving the money and shelf space for *Chinese Democracy*, when and if it finally arrives. —CN

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