

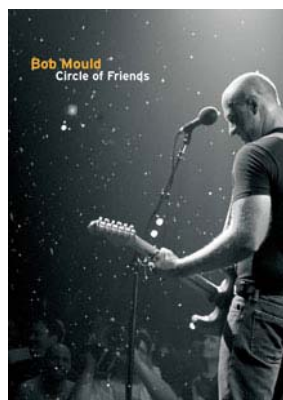


- Left of the Dial Magazine

December 9, 2007

[Bob Mould/Circle of Friends: MVD](#)

Filed under: [Reviews](#) — leftofthedialmag @ 1:18 am



After watching these fellows bury deep into Mould's catalog clad in almost faceless monochrome T-shirts, I think the circle of friends might be re-named the men in black. Pedestrian presentation aside, this fine-caliber DVD is an excellent re-visitation of songs new and old, all of which have undoubtedly defined Mould as part of the epicenter of alternative rock for three decades, from the fomented poetry and sonic brazenness turned pop inventiveness of pioneers Husker Du to his foray with Sugar, which wielded several nuggets of controlled and somewhat radio friendly abrasion and adeptness. Also, one must not forget his tireless web of solo albums, each turning towards mature introspection, musical searching, and unexpected turns. This DVD looks at the full arc with thrift and prowess, finding him at the well-honored 9:30 Club in DC with a group tireless partners, including most notably Brendan Canty, know for his long stint in Fugazi and earlier, Rites of Spring. This is the cadre behind his last album too, so there is little surprise when they visit recent selections from Body of Song. However, the titillating treats include a long look at Sugar songs, including the monster pop riffage of "Changes" and "Hoover Dam." Even more ecstasy-driven is his stabs at several noted Husker Du songs, big and small, including a steroid-induced version of "Celebrated Summer." ([more...](#))

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July 20, 2007

[All Things Must Converge: An interview with Helen Money of Verbow, etc!](#)

Filed under: [Features](#) — leftofthedialmag @ 10:36 am



In a time when Polly Panic and Rasputina are also offering up cello-based concept rock of sorts, why do you think that making an instrumental record will carve out a different experience for listeners? Do you think of it as essentially a kind of pop experience, distilled, in which the lyrics, or a kind of lyricism, are sublimated or understood within the music itself?

As to your first question, I guess I made an instrumental cello record cause that's what I play, and that's how I express myself. Up to this point I haven't been thinking about creating an experience for a particular audience when I write. I definitely have music that I like and that speaks to me, and I'm sure that's the language I use. I'm mostly thinking about what I want to express, hoping I can share it and that it translates.

Last night I played a show with a couple metal bands and it was the best experience I've had yet playing live as a solo artist. I wasn't sure they would like what I did at all, but they did - they really got what it. The whole experience was so unpretentious and real, it felt like they gave me

the freedom to just do my thing. But if I had set out to write something with them in mind I don't know if it would have been the same. [\(more...\)](#)

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July 16, 2007

[Helen Money/ Self-titled: Cellobird Records](#)

Filed under: [Reviews](#) — leftofthedialmag @ 10:23 am



It takes a lot to withdraw from a full-paid fellowship to work with Fred Frith, but this eye on the prize recording is hopefully what Ms. Money hoped to gain by turning towards her own work. Like Rasputina and Polly Panic, Helen has re-invented, partly, the world of cello-rock (this ain't no Electric Light Orchestra!), though unlike with her former band mates Verbow, on this outing she has eloped to a future without drums, or much of anything outside a guitar, to hoist her into the city of the ear. In some ways, it's much more exotic this way, for even the first song "Dreaming" becomes a dark piece of celluloid musique, partly feeling like the heft of Peter Gabriel's "Passion" soundtrack. It is ominous, moving, and all encompassing, even in the small burst of a few minutes, whereas "Hum" is punctuated by stops, gaps, silence, and bareboned rhythmic underpinning. The first song coats you, but this one simply tantalizes, withdrawing strategically, then pressing forward, darting in and out, weaving, while a counter line signals that there is two presences; hence, this is a dance of sorts. "Jackson" goes electro-modulated, not unlike Moby meets Kronos Quartet in a Michael Mann mood. It is soaring, neon blue tubed, and shimmering in stealthy grace, akin to a futuristic tone poem of skyscrapers weeping. Then there are moments of impressionistic repose, like "Birds," a tiny web of interlocking gestures that feels similar to tiny sparrows flitting at your feet in dried brush or shifting piles of autumn leaves. It's the kind of music that you understand would work well with Bob Mould, as she did, to color and finesse a narrative. [\(more...\)](#)

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April 23, 2007

[An interview with John Robb of Goldblade and the Membranes! Part II!](#)

Filed under: [Features](#) — leftofthedialmag @ 9:07 am



It is my understanding that you met one of the early members of Goldblade while at a gym. You both loved punk rock and martial arts. I work out twice a week and often wonder if it is about health, or maybe an unconscious compulsion to reach a fascist body stereotype that is as far-fetched as the Barbie image is for women. No doubt, Mick Jagger, Iggy Pop, and David Bowie work out too, but is there an inherent irony to punk rockers trying to carve out a "cut" body?

For some people, punk rock is a big piss up, and that's cool with me. A drunken crowd is a lot wilder to play to than a sober one! But I got bored of all that stuff years ago. Your body is not made for slobbering around in a chair. It's made to run around and hunt things and since I'm a vegetarian I don't want to hunt anything! So, I've got to do some physical stuff... [\(more...\)](#)

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January 6, 2007

[An archive interview with Gary Floyd from LOTD #1!](#)

Filed under: [Reviews](#) — leftofthedialmag @ 2:52 pm

GARY FLOYD: Big Bear Blues Punk Hero (collages by Russell Etchen)



When as lead singer for the Dicks you came on stage with the hammer and sickle symbols, or the chocolate panties and condoms filled with mayonnaise and water, was it about youthful shock value, or were you, like the band the Feederz, making an art statement and trying to subvert the traditional notion of rock stars?

I always felt that if it made anybody feel more deviant then my work had been done. I did think of myself as very political back then, and I did consider myself a communist back in those days, but I also never aligned myself with any kind of political party like the Revolutionary Communist Party or any of that shit. I have always been very happy about that. Politics, to me, is like an inward thing, and if you happen to find people that you can communicate with, then that's all the better. To just join things has always irritated me. As far as the other thing, I liked to shock people and it seemed to work at the time. When I moved to San Francisco I stopped doing it...

It was redundant?

Yeah, plus I wanted the music to be what carried the Dicks, not the antics. Antics are fun, but I didn't want them to be the main thing. [\(more...\)](#)

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September 22, 2006

[Looking For the Stars in the Highway: An Interview with Dave Swanson of Rainy Day Saints, Death of Samantha, and Guided by Voices!!](#)

Filed under: [Features](#) — leftofthedialmag @ 8:26 am



(Rainy Day Saints photos from Theresa K)

First, let's go back to the future. Magnet magazine just ran a long article on the seemingly dubious label Homestead, which released four Death of Samantha albums. Did you get a chance to see the article, and if so, how best can you describe the band's fairly long-lasting relationship with the label, which housed many of the 1980's great indie bands?

Yeah, I read that article, and actually really liked what John (Petkovic from DOS) said in there. I think he nailed the idea that if these people are really thinking they were ripped off by the label, they don't get out much. Every label, in a sense is a rip off, but honestly, how much money was ever made by any of those bands?! ([more...](#))

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