



OUT OF YOUR MOUTH

Draghdad (ViK Recordings/BMG)

It was tempting for a moment to slag off Calgary's Out Of Your Mouth as the new Econoline Crush. Like Trevor Hurst's late-lamented vehicle, OoYM graft industrial rock armour onto the warm flesh of melody, a combo that pays lip service to the underground but goes down on its knees to service rock radio. But frontman Jason Darr evinces a sly sense of humour that EC never had. Indeed, his songs explore a decayed demimonde fuelled by sex, drugs and mental instability that mom and dad don't want you to ever discover. The first single, an attention-grabbing cover of Madonna's 'Music', pumps up the synth quotient but *Draghdad* is mostly about guitars, intense vocals and casting a jaundiced eye on a messed-up world. Nice but not smooth.

7

CK Dexter Haven



PJ HARVEY

Uh Huh Her (Island Records)

Ms. Polly Jean Harvey has once again dredged her broken heart, and she's come up with something black, bitter and brilliant. In its occasional fits of anger and spite, *Uh Huh Her* recalls the unpredictable, unstable early work of *Dry* (1992) and *Rid Of Me* (1995). But Harvey has grown up both as a woman and a musician so her emotions are often cradled in layered, subtle arrangements, most notably on 'The Life And Death of Mr. Bad Mouth' and the understated 'Shame'. Harvey's increasing control over her talents means that even the rawest, most traditional PJ track, 'Who The F**k?', benefits from a playfulness born of confidence. Where her last album, 2000's *Stories From The City, Stories From The Sea*, vibrated with newfound love, *Uh Huh Her* is fuelled by heartbreak (album closer, 'The Darker Days Of Me And Him', is most affecting). Harvey also indulges her libido in the sinuous 'The Slow Drug' and the innuendo-laden 'The Letter'. It's impolite to wish anyone unhappiness but if the results are as mesmerizing as this...

7.5

Macaulay Connor



SKINNY PUPPY

The Greater Wrong Of The Right (SPV)

Compared to Skinny Puppy's much loved earlier work, there's less two time grime dirtying up *The Greater Wrong Of The Right*, cEvin Key and Ogre's first collection of new material since 1996's *The Process*, but that doesn't make it any less compelling or disturbing. The differences - it's evolution, really - make this Puppy's most accessible record. Ogre's impressionistic lyrics and anguished barks have been replaced with still surreal but structured words which are actually sung. There are even verses, choruses and melody, not that any of these tracks is likely to be embraced by radio; the clubs, though, are going to love this, especially 'Immortal', a guitar-inflected dance floor stomper, and 'Pro-test' which finds Ogre rapping over manic beats. SP's trademark eerie vocal manipulations are extant on 'Neuwerld' and 'Ghostman' while Key's ominous instrumentation makes 'dOwnsizer' a frightening listen. If the duo's patented dance floor psychosis seems conventional on certain tracks (like 'Past Present'), it's only because they have so heavily influenced a generation of goth industrial musicians. Dig it, indeed.

7

Sean Plummer



THE STREETS

A Grand Don't Come For Free (Warner)

Eminem and 50 Cent get heroes' welcomes in England, but don't look for Mike Skinner to receive reciprocal treatment over here. The white British rapper (stop that sniggering) boasts as much skill as Em or 50, but Skinner's delivery, production and subject matter are so far afield from what currently constitutes American hip-hop that it's unlikely *A Grand Don't Come For Free*, his truly brilliant follow-up to *Original Pirate Material*, will ever reach the true heads. The fact that it's a concept album (an unfortunate term) won't help. Over stuttering beats and subtle production, Skinner spits the story of a geezer who loses his mum's thousand quid, meets and loses a fit bird named Simone, and can't get his bleedin' TV fixed. No gats, bitches or ho's, but plenty of lager, birds and Anglophilic chatter that won't likely translate. It's a funny and intensely human story with more heart than any hip-hop record in the last few years. Truly next shite.

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Sean Plummer

MUSIC DVD...

COMPILED BY SEAN PLUMMER AND KEITH SHARP



Britain's early '70s glam rock movement wasn't well received on this side of the Atlantic, David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust being its chief protagonist. However, domestic success was achieved by the likes of T. Rex, Slade, Gary Glitter, Mud, American Ex Pat, Suzie Quatro and my faves, The Sweet, best known Stateside for their latter hit 'Ballroom Blitz'. **GLITZ, BLITZ AND HITZ** tells the Sweet story from a number of conflicting viewpoints, mixing historical concert footage with new interviews with guitarist Andy Scott, former producer/manager Phil Wainman, and Nicky Chinn (one half of the Chinn-Mike Chapman songwriting team). When lead singer Brian Connolly fell victim to alcohol and was fired, the quartet became a trio but were history by 1982. Connolly and drummer Mick Tucker eventually died, while Scott still plays the band's hits and bassist Steve Priest lives in the US. *KS*



Other than Dave Gahan himself, I'm not sure how many people thought a Dave Gahan solo career was a good idea. After all, the Depeche Mode singer, while undeniably talented and charismatic, had never written a DM song. What could he have to say? A lot, actually, and last year's *Paper Monsters* turned out to be a decent first effort. Even more surprising was the intensity and joy of Gahan's live show (his Toronto concert last summer was the best of 2003). The man was reinvigorated, as if he'd never been on a stage before. **LIVE MONSTERS** captures his Paris performance, and it's a good blend of his solo material ('Dirty Sticky Floors', 'Bottle Living') and old DM chestnuts ('Never Let Me Down Again', 'I Feel You', 'Personal Jesus'). "Live Monsters: A Short Film" documents the creation of the album and Gahan's reasons for doing it. A more than adequate stop-gap until the next Mode record. *SP*



Anyone still living under the misapprehension that Evanescence is Goth need only pick up **GOTH - THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION**. That said, Cleopatra's two-disc set is far, far, far from comprehensive. Disc One, the misnamed Gothic Industrial Madness, offers a selective survey of late '80s/early '90s industrial, with a few genuine classics (Clock DVA's 'The Hacker', Pigface's 'Little Sisters', Die Krupps' 'To The Hilt' among them) mixed in with a load of middling shite. Where is Ministry? Nine Inch Nails? Nitzer Ebb? On other labels, that's where. Similarly, the 'Goth Box' disc is a very selective survey of the scene. Siouxsie And The Banshees, The Sisters Of Mercy and Bauhaus are nowhere to be found, although we do get some potent offerings from Switchblade Symphony ('Clown'), Chameleons U.K. ('In Shreds') and Red Lorry/Yellow Lorry ('Spinning Round'). The bulk of this low-budget set is second generation, second class darkwave but you can't argue the variety - over 240 minutes, 54 videos and 12 audio tracks. *SP*



British culture in the '90s found itself energized by a newfound lust for life after eleven gloomy years under Margaret Thatcher. Writer/director John Dower's **LIVE FOREVER: THE RISE AND FALL OF BRIT POP** documents the delirious rise of the island's music, film, art, fashion and politics as well as its precipitous fall towards decade's end by allowing the preeminent stars of the day - Blur's Damon Albarn, Oasis's Noel and Liam Gallagher, and Pulp's Jarvis Cocker among them - tell it for themselves. What emerges is a surprisingly cohesive story that links the newfound sense of hope that emerged with the election of Tony Blair's Labour government to the emergence of proud British music; the result, of course, was "Cool Britannia," a short-lived phenomenon that died when artists and the public alike were betrayed by Labour. Dower casts the Oasis vs. Blur controversy as class war and suggests that Princess Di's death and the emergence of cocaine as the country's drug of choice marked the death of that all-too-brief renaissance. *SP*