

Glitter Gutter Trash



Kate Bush

While

I would like to delight in the fact that last month's GGT seemed to be the popular page to rip out of SLUG. I know that my column spent the majority of its days face down on bathroom floors due to the rather thematically appropriate advertisement on page 18. Of all the interviews to get away she was the one....

Kate Bush
Aerial
Columbia
Street: 11.08

Kate Bush = Joni Mitchell if she played piano, danced ballet and hung out with Peter Gabriel.

Kate Bush is one of the most important musicians to come from the late 70s and blossom in the 80's without the kitsch and passé of post-punk pop while keeping all the reckless abandon. She's a dancer, performance artist and a brilliant musician with a taste for experimentation that somehow has endeared her to the masses and the elitist music-connoisseur alike. It's been 12 years of silence since her last album, *The Red Shoes*. **Tori Amos**, **Sarah McLachlan**, the underappreciated **Jane Siberry** and their contemporaries have stolen their bits of the spotlight, not to mention style, substance and sound while Kate worked away in her studio promising a new album that seemingly would never come. I worried what time might do to her; new material could easily be a disappointment. *The Red Shoes* was adventurous, clearly a reaction to the beautiful but restrained album, *The Sensual World*, that preceded it. It was also underwhelming, despite the exotic spirit its singles "Eat the Music" and "Rubber Band Girl" offered. *Aerial* is spread out over two discs; *A Sea of Honey* being a more traditional, radio-friendly and *A Sky of Honey* more conceptual and engaging. *Aerial* is the album that should have followed *The Hounds of Love*. While it lacks the breakaway passion of "Running Up That Hill," or the whimsical magic of the title track "Hounds of Love,"

it does recapture the moods with broken dialogue sprinkled among gorgeous vocals and lush surroundings that dominated the remainder of that album. Lyricaly, Bush is still able to take the

most simple, often awkward phrases and twist them into something beautiful like day-dreams rooted in likely possibilities. Not nearly a masterpiece, but ridiculously close.

Various Artists
Nothing Concrete
99X/10
Street: 08.23

99x/10 = folktronica a la Beth Orton +/- William Orbit + incidental film music +/- The Album Leaf
Former **Cure** keyboardist and Moog enthusiast **Roger O'Donnell** has busied himself with the task of starting a record label focusing on a cocktail made of electronics and organic instrumentation. *Nothing Concrete*, a collection of bands O'Donnell has either signed to the label or has an expressed interest in, plays out like the classic 4ad compilation *Lonely is an Eyesore* in that while technically speaking, the bands featured are lumped together in a genre, at the same time their personalities, quirks and nuances set them apart from each other. Like the incidental music from the *Lost in Translation* soundtrack, *Nothing Concrete* captures a mood that is both melancholy and warm. While **Cure** fans might be shocked to find O'Donnell's two tracks sound nothing like his former band, there is more than enough reason to look forward to his impending full-length release. Highlights also include the jaw dropping cinematic tracks from **Goddamn Electric Bill**, the **Sigur Ros** by-way-of **Beth Orton** sound of **Maybe**, the space jazz cabaret of **Erin Lang**, the electronic scrapings of **Somnolent**, **Dead Waiter** and **Sensory Factory**. I like **Ecce's** warm, circular swaying of guitars, organ and electronics as well. 99X/10 has the makings of a label where each release is as highly anticipated as the last regardless of which artist it happens to be.

Daniel Ash
Come Alive
Psychobaby
Street: 10.25

Daniel Ash = T. Rex + distortion + ectronica Bauhaus, Tones on Tale, Love & Rockets and a handful of solo releases are all Daniel Ash has to decorate his résumé. Not to mention college radio would have been pretty silent in the 80s if it weren't for Ash. *Come Alive* is a brief history, a live document of a career, a best of sorts (although one could complain that a dozen or so songs didn't fit into the set list). It is an album from a tour that started with a disastrous car wreck and somehow turned into a life-affirming celebration. If you were unable to catch the shows you missed out on one of the finest nights of your life, this album is as close as you'll get to understanding exactly what I mean. It's brilliant and still only pales in comparison to being there. Even the quips between songs show the delicate balance of the fragile egomaniac that has somehow made Daniel one of my favorite personalities. Maybe if you close your eyes you can imagine the swagger as Daniel, bruised and battered, played songs you thought you'd never get to hear live. Almost like being there. This is the pops indeed.

The Human League
Live At the Dome (DVD)
MVD
Street: 08.23

The Human League = An awkward Roxy Music + Ladytron

Okay, so **Philip Oakey** isn't **David Gahan** and The Human League aren't **Depeche Mode** and initially their role in the history of electronic music might not seem significant. But after one listen to *Dare* even the most casual of listener couldn't be blind to the debt that electroclash owes to them. For the uninitiated, The Human League are a warmer shade of **Gary Numan** with an abundance of female vocal thrown in to soften the robotic chill. Granted they have less soul than 80's contemporaries **ABC** ever did but they've also got more than three good songs to their credit. *Live at the Dome* is a postcard from the final show of their '03 tour and captures the band in top form supporting *Secrets*; their most solid effort in twenty years. The set list is optimistic, full of the more "melodic" songs (Oakey is keen to point that out) like "Mirror Man," "Fascination," "Don't You Want Me?" and "Love Me Madly?" with a few of their darker numbers "Human," "The Lebanon" and "Darkness" thrown in to for artistic balance. I suppose one could complain that Oakey is a bit chatty and that they've seemingly forgotten they recorded anything in the 90s but in all fairness the group clearly knows its strengths and *Romantic?* and *Octopus* weren't exactly stellar releases (could have done with "Heart Like a Wheel") but you'd be missing the point: The Human League's influence is seriously underrated.

Semaphore
Make
Laughing Shadows
Street: N/A

Semaphore = Boards of Canada + a touch of Brian Eno's sense of disorganization as a structure

Not to be confused with the DC band of the same name, Semaphore, in this case, or perhaps till the lawyers get involved, is **Kirby Clements**. *Make* is a solid slab of ambient textures that knows just when to mess things up a bit and keep the songs from wandering off into something your mother would call "lovely" or "perfect music to fall asleep to." In fact, this is one of those albums that really benefits from being turned up to the point where you're neighbors are banging on the door wondering why you've chosen that particular hour of the night to throw an electrical soundstorm down their throats. It isn't overtly experimental, threatening or outrageously brilliant but it is good without being derivative.