



Radiohead *In Rainbows* (Self-Released)

★★★★★ (It's Radiohead, obviously)
Let's face it, the music industry has changed drastically since Radiohead issued *Pablo Honey* some 15 years ago. Today, the most a major artist can hope for is their record to go platinum, so these relentlessly

inventive chaps have rowed against the current of capitalism and released their eighth studio album digitally and free of cost. *In Rainbows* is a collection of 10 tracks, most previously heard by attendees of their last tour, and bootleg versions of the live cuts were found on the Internet. As far as the sound, the record is nothing short of what can be expected from a group of guys pushing 40 with seven albums under their belts. Starting with the floor thumping "15 Steps," *In Rainbows* is off and running with a chest of surprises and progressive songs that only demonstrate why some bands hang around for a while and others fade away—Radiohead, of course, being the former. Most importantly, *In Rainbows* demonstrates evolution in their music because it is mysterious as ever. So mysterious, in fact, that it becomes difficult to pinpoint exactly how the record differs from others. One nice surprise for hardcore fans is the official release of the track "Nude" (although a little less rocking in this version), which before could only be partially heard in the film *Meeting People is Easy*, and also via a demo version that circulated the Web. *In Rainbows* puts Radiohead's career into a blurry kind of perspective, like the slow growth of a human where you can't really identify one specific point or time of change but you know it's going well. —Dan Masek

Standout Track: "15 Steps"



Broken Social Scene Presents Kevin Drew *Spirit If...* (Arts & Crafts)

★★★★★
The artwork may look nonthreatening and inviting, all yellow with sparkly unicorns, but this semi-solo album

from Broken Social Scene frontman Kevin Drew is gritty and tough, with undertones of beauty and love. Like other BSS albums, the Canadian super-sized group (19 members strong) serve up poppy and perfectly orchestrated songs. Drew delivers his lyrics in a usual mellow tone with spurts of wailing voice-cracking as he rants on about f--king and fighting—but listen close and you'll find there's hope and passion in his words, too. Free loving, breezy pop songs are balanced perfectly with just enough chaos and confusion to resonate with you. Song titles like "F--ked Up Kid" and "Gang Bang Suicide" draw up vivid images, but the music itself is mellow, pretty, and dreamy. *Spirit If...* is one-third Dinosaur Jr *Where You Been*, one third the Flaming Lips' *The Soft Bulletin*, and one third Radiohead and Sonic Youth all blended with original orchestral, acoustic, melodic, and harmonized sounds that only 23 musicians could create (guests include J Mascis). BSS has more "presents" albums planned for the future to showcase other members of their talented collective. Fans will enjoy *Spirit If...* It might take a few listens to get into the groove, but if you like BSS *You Forgot it in People*, this album will be a welcoming addition to your indie rock library. —Erik Olsen

Standout Track: "Safety Brick"



Pink Floyd and Syd Barrett *The Pink Floyd and Syd Barrett Story* DVD (MVD Visual)

★★★★☆

Nearly 40 years after parting ways with Pink Floyd, nearly 35 years since his last album or interview, and just a little over a year since his death, Syd Barrett is still a legendary icon of 1960s rock and roll. As the singer, songwriter, guitar player, and founder of Pink Floyd, Syd made quite an impact in a short few years; however, a combination of extreme LSD use and undiagnosed schizophrenia lead

him away from music and into a life of mental illness and seclusion that makes for a sad story but with an epic soundtrack. This DVD (an hour-long main feature plus nearly three more hours of extras) tells the tale of Pink Floyd's early years and Syd's biography with in-depth personal interviews from all Pink Floyd members, as well as some old friends, complete with tons of little-seen footage of the band in their early days. Touching and interesting stories about Syd abound. Hearing the Floyd guys tell the well-known story of a bloated, shaven head and eyebrows, obviously unwound Syd brushing his teeth while jumping up and down and randomly showing up at the studio as Floyd recorded "Shine on You Crazy Diamond" (written about Syd) after his seven-year hiatus was certainly sad. If you're a fan of early Pink Floyd or any of the stellar but scarce solo work Syd made post-Pink, this DVD is well worth your inspection. You'll certainly learn and see something new about a man with an undying legacy. —Mark Whiteley



Oh No! Oh My! *Between the Devil and the Sea* (Dim Mak)

★★★★☆

The devilish flutes and cheery guitar folk edge is all oh, oh yeah! You'd swear it was lullabies created by members of Tenacious D and Modest Mouse. Between you and me, *Between the Devil and the Sea* is a rocking good album. Track two, "Our Mouths were Wet," has that *Malcome in the Middle* theme song sound (you

know, "You're not the boss of me now"), and it's full of other classic diddys favorable to most Decemberists fans. "Oh Be One" is another good song, but you get it "One Time Thru" so it's not one that holds longevity. Although you may disagree with me, because it's catchy as hell! Check out this album. —Jon Ehinger

Standout track: "The Bike, Sir"



By the End of Tonight and Tera Melos *Complex Full of Phantoms* (Temporary Residence Limited)

★★★★☆

If you like drums, you need this album. I mean, they have a song called "Philty Collins." "Philty Collins!" That alone should be reason enough to check out By The End of Tonight and Tera Melos' latest split album, *Complex Full of Phantoms*. Simply put, it rocks. Tonight's

last album destroyed, but this one defines absolute carnage. I should add that these guys do care about melody; unlike most instrumental groups however, there are no songs within songs or epic journeys. If you take out all the tension-fueled builds that bands like Mogwai and Godspeed use so effectively, you're left with By The End of Tonight's music, one big climax. If tracks like "Ghost Boat," "Delaware is Depressing," and "Jealous of a Ghost" don't slay you with their titles, the constant chord changes, shape-shifting mammoth drums and pure unpredictability contained therein will have you reminding yourself to breathe every few seconds. As final track "Elvis Never Didn't Die" abruptly leaves you wanting more, the next band, Tera Melos introduces its brand of equally enthralling rock. While By The End of Tonight might veer closely to math rock, Tera Melos could be deemed calculus rock. The musicianship on display here is so intricate—especially in tracks like "When Worms Learn to Fly"—that you wonder how they'll pull this stuff off live. Just when you think the band has a severe case of ADD with their mercilessly complex guitar lines, they hit you with "Party With Tina," a straight-up song with vocals and a tune lasting more than a few seconds. Though both bands have split this album, the brevity of each song along with the pure unadulterated joy that each band exhibits lends the whole thing some unity. It's as if the listener has stumbled in on the groups' private practice sessions, and it's refreshing to hear someone actually playing for no one but themselves. —William Nguyen

Standout track: "Philty Collins"