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Reviews In Brief (2007) (2006) (2005) (2004)

2007

STARZ
Greatest Hits Live
 MVD Entertainment Group 2007

"The live collection of the 70's rockers greatest hits seems to capture the band in fine form. The CD is compiled from at least 3 different performances and while I found the sound to be adequate to mediocre, the quality of their material does seem to shine through.

While I wouldn't put the band in my own personal Top 10 of 1970's rockers, they are pretty good. I think it is a shame I wasn't musically aware in the 70's because I probably would have liked the band. They've got a lively and energetic sound tied to that particular era and it does keep the ears engaged, even during the first half of the disc where the quality of the recording isn't even as good as some bootlegs I've listened to over the years.

The audio quality is the biggest problem I had with the entire disc. I think if you are going to reissue this type of album, you really need to make the sound more presentable than what a typical bootlegger could accomplish.

You want to check out tracks like "Detroit Girls", "Any Way That You Want It", and "Cherry Baby" in particular, but surprisingly at least to me, each song is pretty good. If you like the 70's rock era, you probably know of the band. You'll definitely like this release. If you, like me, weren't really into music when you were less than 10 years old, Greatest Hits Live provides a look back to a time when hard rock was in the infancy stage of what the genre has become today.

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

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Review for Starz - *Back In Action DVD (2006)*



[Official Site](#)

KMFDM *Tohuvabohu* Metropolis Records 2007

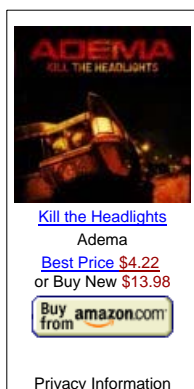
"German experimental group KMFDM have always been one of those groups that have been pigeon-holed into a specific genre, when in reality, they are so much more. For the most part, when people here their name they think techno music. Yes, the drums are programmed, but a lot of their music is guitar and vocal hook driven. "Superpower" is a perfect example of that.

"Looking for Strange" send the guitars to the background while emphasizing the vocal hook. "I Am What I Am" is quite anthemic, while Saft und Kraft" is frantic and scatter-brained. "Not in My Name" treads Nine Inch Nails territory in sound. "Spit or Swallow" makes a clever political statement. Tohuvabohu may not be a pure rock record, but if your looking to mix it up a bit, it's going to deliver the same punch and electricity."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

ADEMA *Kill the Headlights* Adema Partnership 2007

"One has to wonder how many singers Adema will go through before packing it up. On the positive side of things, the group gets more and more melodic with each new vocalist. That's not to say that the group doesn't still drive home some heavy riffs and beats on Kill the Headlights. They also continue to write some of their best songs lyrically. However, the group comes from a time when they were lumped together with other alternative/nu-metal artists.

As time goes on, despite breaking away from that sound, people will still remember them for that. And each time they change vocalists, it will diminish exactly who Adema is and sounds like. It may be better for the group to start back up as something new and fresh and try to sell these songs that way, then trying to ride a name that's slowly starting to represent nothing solid and constant."

--George Dionne



out of 5

Review for Adema - *Planets (2005)*



[Official Site](#)

LIBERTY N' JUSTICE *Independence Day* LNJ Records 2007

"Liberty N' Justice mastermind Justin Murr rounds up a who's who from the eighties metal scene once again to spread the word of Jesus Christ through hard rock music. And that's not a bad thing.

Once you get past the awful John Corabi track "Doubting Thomas," you are in for quite a treat (there's a reason he hasn't worked out as a vocalist in other bands). Artists like Jack Russell ("Monkey Dance"), Kelly Keagey & Mark Slaughter ("Soldier"), Pete Loran ("Phoenix"), and Ted Poley ("Praying for a Miracle") give such great performances, you'll be baffled as to why they're not still in the mainstream today.

I did have to chuckle a bit when Jani Lane performed on a track called "Addiction." I think he was able to add a little bit of personal experience to that one. All jokes aside, a great album with a positive message. We all need to be reminded sometimes that there is a power greater than us, and that good and bad things all happens for a reason. "

--George Dionne



out of 5

[Review for Liberty N' Justice - *Sdtrk of a Soul* \(2006\)](#)



[Official Site](#)

SONATA ARCTICA
Unia
Nuclear Blast Records 2007

"The musical pace is definitely on the high energy fast paced side, but "The Harvest" and "Fly With The Black Swan" are the only songs that resonate with any signs of life. Otherwise the album comes off as some very bloodless, cold and antiseptic prog metal."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5

A SHORELINE DREAM
Coastal EP
Latenight Weeknight Records 2007



[Official Site](#)

"The EP opens with tranquil rhythms, soothing melodies, and just enough guitar distortion on Ukraine. The track reminds you of a long walk on a sunset beach. The songs that follow, "The Barrier" & "New York," have a darker more haunting feel to them. More like a stranger in a strange land. The final track "Aftershock" returns to the same concepts as the opener. Overall, *Coastal* is a brief journey into musical serenity."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

THE LOVING LOSS
You Could Kill EP
 Self-Released 2007

"This seven track EP displays some great guitar tones, but is literally destroyed by the vocalist whining and screeching his way through the lyrics. At some points he pulls off a melody, but it's with the help of electronic enhancements."

--George Dionne



1 out of 5



[Official Site](#)

PHONOGRAPH
Hiawatha Talking Machine EP
 Red Ghost Music 2007

"If Tom Petty were a progressive artist, he'd probably sound like Phonograph. On their latest EP the group infuses smooth vocals with acoustic guitars, and even throws in a string section here and there. "Charles Bircher" and "Plates on Sticks" tend to stand out above the rest with their killer instrumental outros."

--George Dionne



4 out of 5



[Official Site](#)

PALE OBSESSION
Songs of Love and Death
 Self-Released 2006

"You almost feel trapped in a frightening horror movie and the piercing keyboards pulse throughout "Between the Shadows." Haunting vocals only make it more and more obvious that there is no light at the end of the tunnel. "The Lovers Die" is just as dark and ominous. "Kiss the Sky" is melody driven despite its depressing lyrical content.

"Tomorrow Must Be More" is vocalist Joe May's last glimmer of hope in a world of despair. Somebody give this band a record deal! They could give H.I.M. a run for the money on the gothic rock scene. The EP only down fall is its too damn short."

--George Dionne



5 out of 5



[Official Site](#)

EVERY AVENUE
AH! EP
 Fearless Records 2007

"One More Song" is catchy as hell with its pop-rock rhythms and melodic vocals. The chorus is sure to rattle around in your head. Driving rhythms is pounding drums tend to dominate "Where Were You." Electronic keyboards enhance the heartbreaking track "Nothing." "Getting Out" keeps the energy flowing with hooks and melody galore. If Every Avenue could continue what they have put forth into a full album, I would buy it in an instant."

--George Dionne



out of 5

SCHOOLYARD HEROES *Abominations* Stolen Transmission 2007



[Abominations](#)

Schoolyard Heroes

Best Price \$1.22

or Buy New \$9.98



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[Official Site](#)

"Every horror movie fan knows that the big budget movies are not where it's at. It's the horror B-Movies that give you more blood for your dollar. Yeah, they're short on plot, but delivery the more gore per minute. If there was such a thing as "B" Music, then Schoolyard Heroes would be on the top of the list. Hell, *Abominations* could be the soundtrack to many of B-movies I've seen.

The lyrics are twisted, tortured, and filled with plenty of gory visions. The music is high-energy for the most part, with a few dark and slow entries. The female vocals fit the whole horror experience since it's the woman doing all the screaming. The song titles are ridiculous, but the overall product is a frightening and powerful experience."

--George Dionne



out of 5

ALTER BRIDGE *Blackbird* Universal Republic 2007



[Blackbird](#)

Alter Bridge

Best Price \$6.52

or Buy New \$10.99



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[Official Site](#)

"Let's face it, the first Alter Bridge album was pretty much a clone of Creed. With most of the band being members of that group, it wasn't hard to see that would be the result. However, a few years have past and the group returns with their sophomore effort *Blackbird*. The first few riffs of the opening track "Ties That Bind" let you know that this group is putting Creed behind them.

The riffs are darker, the music is heavier, yet the positive messages stay the same. It took me till the middle of the album to really get into it. "Before Tomorrow Comes," "Rise Today," and "Blackbird" really define the album. Myles Kennedy's vocals are gritty, powerful, and soulful, while guitarist Mark Tremonti is simply on fire."

--George Dionne



out of 5



H.I.M.
Venus Doom
Sire Records 2007

"It seems the more and more "Americanized" H.I.M. is becoming (what I mean by that is the more promotion they are receiving in the U.S.), the more and more they are just plain sucking. On *Venus Doom* Valo still remains a tortured soul lyrically, but sonically the band's dark tones are fading away.

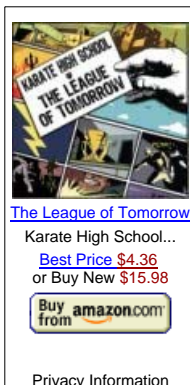
So is a lot of their energy and hook-laden choruses. They even take a chance at an acoustic number, which thankfully I very short. "The Kiss of Dawn" is the only track that I really dug. I think H.I.M. was much better when they were on a tiny label overseas and only a select few knew about them."

--George Dionne



out of 5

REVIEW FOR "*DARK LIGHT* (2005)"



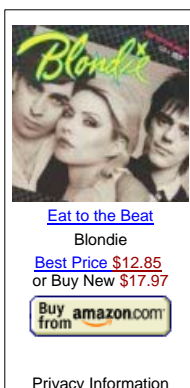
KARATE HIGH SCHOOL
The League of Tomorrow
EVO Recordings 2007

"Karate High School's debut Arcade Rock caught my ear with its 8-bit & 16 bit video game sounds worked into their pop-rock compositions. However, it seems that they may have just been a theme album. On *The League of Tomorrow*, the group cut back on the video game tones and adds more progressive elements; which I was a little saddened to hear. They do manage to pump up the vocal melodies, but sound a little more emo than their previous effort. If anything, they have a flair for the longest song titles ever."

--George Dionne



out of 5



BLONDE
Eat the Beat CD/DVD [Collectors Edition]
EMI/Capitol Records 2007

"New Wave legends dig into the vault for a unique release. The collectors edition of 1979's *Eat the Beat* is proclaimed the World's first video album. This concept is quite revolutionary, if it was still 1979. Today it seems kind of silly. However, when you think about it, this video album pre-dates MTV. The majority of the material included on the DVD ranges from concept videos to live performances. It's an interesting look at the music scene to say the least (it's also a great way to catch Debbie Harry in her prime).

As for the music, if your only family with Blondie's radio hits, you're probably going to be a bit lost. The CD doesn't really contain any major hits, but does show the

band taking some musical chances. Some of the music works, some of it doesn't. Either way, the DVD portion makes checking out this collection worth it.

--George Dionne



out of 5

ENEMY REMAINS

S/T

Onus Records 2007

"The band founded by ex-Fates Warning drummer Steve Zimmerman in 2005 combine a mix of their progressive metal roots and the traditional power metal sound of yesterday and today to form one amazing sound on their self-titled and self-released 3 song EP.



[Official Site](#)

I loved the alternating gritty and soaring style of vocalist Brian Betterton. On "Live For Today" the main verses had the grit, while the chorus had the soaring style. The tempo variations within "Holdin' On" are noteworthy and ear catching. The riffs and overall musicianship on "Fallen" were superb.

This was a great introduction to the band. The 3 songs are superb and I can only hope that it will be sooner rather than later before I hear a full-length album with some heavy label support. Yes, the disc was THAT great!"

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5

MEGADETH

That One Night: Live in Buenos Aires

Image Entertainment 2007

[Megadeth](#)
Megadeth

Best Price \$9.49
or Buy New \$18.98

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[Official Site](#)

"Metal legends Megadeth cap off their 2006 touring cycle with one last show in the place they love the most; Buenos Aires. Frontman Dave Mustaine has said time and time again that this location holds a special place in his heart. His sentiment couldn't be more exemplified than by this phenomenal performance. Although the CD doesn't quite capture the energy and power that the live DVD does, it still sends the message that Megadeth are at the top of their game and can delivery one hell of a show.

There are 21 songs in all on two CDs that span their 20+ year plus career. Classic standards such as "Skin of My Teeth," "She Wolf," "Hangar 18," "Symphony of Destruction," "Peace Sells," and "Holy Wars" are complemented by a handful of gems from their current album at the time The System Has Failed. As a die-hard fan, I was pleased to see them resurrect "Angry Again" into the live set."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Secret Weapon](#)

MxPx

Best Price \$1.99
or Buy New \$15.98



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[Official Site](#)

MXPX
Secret Weapon
Tooth and Nail Records 2007

"You would think that taking a step back from the majors to the indie scene again would be a thorn in the side, but MXPX show absolutely no signs of slowing down. Although I have been sworn to secrecy, I'm going to reveal the punk rockers 'secret weapon': an onslaught of high energy rhythms, rapid-fire guitar riffage, and relatable & catchy lyrical hooks."

--George Dionne



out of 5

RICHIE KOTZEN
Into the Black
Frontiers Records 2006



[Into the Black](#)

Richie Kotzen

Best Price \$13.37
or Buy New \$25.98



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[Official Site](#)

"The ex-Poison guitarist continues to explore the musical landscape far and away from that glam metal period with the deeply blues influenced rock and roll found on Into The Black. Kotzen's got a nice gritty edge to his singing voice and his musical ability should be without question as he wrote, arranged, produced and performed the album by himself.

"Misunderstood" has a hot burning groove to it, while the last track "My Angel" closes the CD in a much slower fashion. The song still manages to have a sweet riff towards the end of the track though. The harder rock edged tracks "You Can't Save Me" and "Sacred Ground" both have a flaming hot delivery.

I consider the Poison album *Native Tongue* the best release the band ever did. I think it comes as no surprise that it's the only CD on which Kotzen played with the band. He's got a great musical vision and he continues to unveil and refine it with every successive release. Into The Black is one beautifully wonderful step on that continuing musical evolution."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5



[Transmutations](#)

Yakuza

Best Price \$1.84
or Buy New \$13.98



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[Official Site](#)

YAKUZA
Transmutations
Prosthetic Records 2007

"Yakuza returns with more of the twisted, dark, and progressive sounds that blew me away on 2006's *Samsara*. How can you not be impressed with a metal band that can throw in some saxophones from time to time? Transmutations is a darker journey than it's predecessor, but still packs a punch when it needs to. The only drawback was the cryptic and faded CD packaging, in which I could not make out the song titles."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Church Mouth](#)
Portugal. The Man
Best Price \$3.13
or Buy New \$13.98

Buy from  amazon.com

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[Official Site](#)


PORTUGAL THE MAN
Church Mouth
Fearless Records 2007

"*Church Mouth* is weak on riffs and heavy on falsetto vocal melodies. It kind of baffles me why I've seen reviews for it in guitar magazines because the album couldn't be further from a 'guitar album.' It seems that the latest trend in the music industry is to hearken back to the trippy, high pitched, funky harmonics of seventies stoner rock. Whether it's successful or not remains to be seen, but as far as Portugal the Man's take on it is concerned; as a vocalist and frontman he captures the ear, but the group itself drops the ball with no real memorable progressions. The focus is too strong on vocals."


--George Dionne



out of 5



[A Lesson in Romanticism](#)
Mayday Parade
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or Buy New \$10.99

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[Official Site](#)


MAYDAY PARADE
A Lesson in Romanticism
Fearless Records 2007

"If you're like me, you can't stand the whiney, pop/punk rock (screamo/emo – whatever you want to call it) that's shoved down your throat on the radio and MTV. While Mayday Parade could be lumped into that pile (mainly the vocals), the group really breaks away from the same-old-same-old with infectious melodies and smart (sometimes tongue-in-cheek) lyrics. Give it a few listens and you'll no doubt be locked in."


--George Dionne



out of 5



[Pothead Punk](#)
Superdude
Best Price \$0.01
or Buy New \$11.98

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[Official Site](#)

SUPERDUDE
Pothead Punk
Ace Records 2007

"Superdude's claim to fame is that he was part of Andy Warhol's entourage. So what? How does this qualify you to be a musician? I'll admit that the opening track "Pothead Punk" is quite catchy, but that's where it ends. Superdude continues to show how much of a non-vocalist he is by lazily firing through nine songs that pretty much describe personalities he met throughout the 70s club/recreational drug scene or about smoking the herb. The spoken word track "Superman" is beyond terrible. Check that, the entire album is beyond terrible. It's super-crap!"

--George Dionne



out of 5



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[Official Site](#)

MARGO GURYAN
16 Words [CD Single]
Pure Mint Records 2007

"'16 Words' is a clever political commentary piece in the vein of a 60s protest song. Guryan assembles 16 words from President Bush's 2003 State of the Union Address and sets it to music. The particular words she uses are to emphasize how our government (President Bush specifically) continues to lie to the American people. I was expecting one thing before I pressed play, and I was pleasantly surprised with the final product. Included on the disc is the track "Yes I Am" (a commentary about Nixon), a video for "16 Words" and notes by Guryan that explain why she put this all together."

--George Dionne

5 Questions with Margo Guryan



out of 5

DIET KONG
S/T
Onus Records 2007



[Official Site](#)

"Diet Kong's music is just as eclectic as his name. This 10 song collection is best described as alternative meets progressive, meets singer-songwriter. The lyrics and vocal structures are pure pop, with plenty of sing-along sections. The rhythms can be funky, hard, and even laid back. It honestly sounds like Diet Kong had a hell-of-a good time putting this album together. In return, you will have a hell-of-a fun time listening to it."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

THE COMPULSIONS
Laughter From Below EP
Self-Released 2007

"Gritty, raw, and hook-laden blues rock with such addictive properties, that you'll be jones'n for more."

--George Dionne



out of 5



HEAVENLY
Virus
Locomotive Records 2007

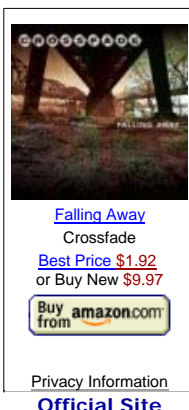
"The Dark Memories" opens up with some melodic guitar work that shifts back and forth. The song provides good singing that flows well with the entire musical work. "Spill Blood or Fire" creates a good atmosphere throughout the track and is a progressive song in general. "The Power & Fury" has some awesome backing keyboard sounds that kind of resemble a dream like presence. "Wasted Time" has a nice groove to it."

--Derek Carey

5 Questions with Heavenly



out of 5



CROSSFADE
Falling Away
Columbia Records 2006

"The follow up to the band's self-titled 2004 debut release continues the band's trail of gritty vocals and aggressive guitar work. Vocalist/guitarist Ed Sloan has some really down and dirty guitar riffs on display throughout the disc. The opener "Washing The World Away" features some gruff guitar lines. Bassist/vocalist Mitch James and drummer James Branham combine with Sloan to form a heck of a rock trio.

The album features 10 edgy rockers that move from a midtempo groove to all out driving rhythms. "Already Gone", "Drown You Out" and "Breathing Slowly" are superb examples of the latter while "Invincible" and "Someday" typify the former. The 11th track and album closer is the only real misstep in song selection. "Never Coming Home" is the lamb coming after the lion (the other 10 tracks). While the band's lyrics can be a bit depressing at times, I really think the band has something going for it and look forward to seeing them continue their winning ways on their next album."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5



SILVERCHAIR
Young Modern
Eleven: A Music Company 2007


"When Silverchair debuted here in the U.S., it was as if they were trying to become the second coming of Nirvana. With their latest album, it seems that the group is trying to be the second coming of The Beatles. Fortunately for them, they pull it off with great ease. Less guitars and more emphasis on piano and vocal melodies is what sets this album apart from the group's early beginnings. For those not in the know, Young Modern really begins where 2002's Diorama left off, and

takes it to another level."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Carry On](#)
Chris Cornell
Best Price \$2.00
or Buy New \$12.99

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CHRIS CORNELL
Carry On
Suretone Records 2007

"Let's face it; Cornell's first solo album was garbage. Because of that, you instantly want to hate his second solo effort. Carry On goes beyond the mundane pop schlock that was *Euphoria Morning*. Cornell still comes off as glossed-over rock, but flexes his vocal pipes hard enough to remind you of his metal roots. Though he never reaches the energetic heights of his Soundgarden and Audioslave days, Cornell still manages to wallop you with some powerful music. "Billy Jean" is by far the worst cover song EVER!"

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Live at the Gorge 05/06](#)
Pearl Jam
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or Buy New \$39.99

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PEARL JAM
Live at the Gorge 05/06 [Box Set]
Rhino Records 2007

"Pearl Jam has always been a fan friendly band. They went head-to-head with Ticket Master because they thought their fans were getting screwed on the service fee. They play two, sometimes three hour shows; and if they are in a city for multiple dates, they never play the same song twice. They offer up numerous bootlegs of their concerts through their fan club and website; by-passing the middle-man and retailers. Now comes the mother of all live box sets.

Pearl Jam catalog three complete concerts on 7 CDs from The Gorge in 2005 & 2006. Included are numerous greatest hits, unique cover songs, rare material, and previously unreleased material. I have to give it to Pearl Jam fans though. Anyone that can sit through 7CDs (or three concerts) of this dreary, un-inspired, boring music, must be really committed. Since Pearl Jam caters to their fans, I'm sure they won't be disappointed with this set. Although, you may need a few uppers to prevent a lack of charisma-induced coma."

--George Dionne



out of 5

TRAVELING WILBURYS
The Traveling Wilburys Collection
Rhino Records 2007



[Traveling Wilburys](#)

The Traveling Wilb...

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 or Buy New [\\$23.99](#)



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"The Beatles' George Harrison, Electric Light Orchestra's Jeff Lynne, Bob Dylan, Roy Orbison, and Tom Petty. Sounds like one hell of a super group, doesn't it? Well, it was! Back in 1988 this five some hooked-up to write and perform the kinds of music they do best. Alone, the five each had their own unique sound. Together, they brought all those sounds together to take themselves to a higher plane. It also helped that they were the closet of friends.

Although they only released two studio albums, the meat-and-potatoes of those albums can be found here (okay, it's both albums with bonus tracks). "Handle with Care" and "End of the Line" were perhaps their most memorable, but each track falls in line with the Americana sound that the Wilburys were known for. Two previously unreleased tracks are included on each disc. Where most bonus tracks are filler and junk, the ones included here are quite good. Be sure to look for the 3 disc Deluxe Edition that includes a live DVD performance."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Double Happiness](#)

Truckee Brothers

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 or Buy New [\\$13.98](#)



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THE TRUCKEE BROTHERS
Double Happiness
Populuxe Records 2007

"Double Happiness evokes a lot of the 70s underground alternative rock with echoed vocals and fuzzy guitars. The vocals duties are split between the distinct tones of Cady and Peat. When singing alone, each brings their own stamp to the music. When singing together, especially trading off with each line or two, it becomes a distraction and outright annoying."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

THE WILDBIRDS
Suzanna EP
Pat's Record Company 2007

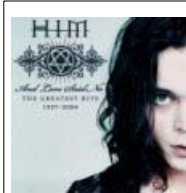
"#421" is loaded with crazy U2- like energy. I just had to keep hitting repeat on my player. "Shake Shake" keeps the flow going with rhythmic breaks thrown in here and there. "Way Down Low" starts off with a drumming mistake (or is it), but then kicks into gear with some great guitar licks and cock-sure vocals. "Suzanna" is an acoustic, broken-heart ballad. The worst part of this disc is that it only has 4 songs. I want more Wildbirds! "

--George Dionne



out of 5

H.I.M.
And Love Said No: Greatest Hits 1997-2004
Universal Republic 2007



[And Love Said No](#)

H.I.M. (His Infern...

[Best Price \\$5.46](#)

or Buy New [\\$13.98](#)



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[Official Site](#)

"Finally! I no longer have to pay \$30+ for the import version of this 'hits' album that's been out in Europe for 3 years now. H.I.M. is one of those bands you just have to experience for yourselves. The first time I heard their brand of goth metal, or as they like to call it love metal, I was instantly hooked. No other band (that I know of) sounds quite like they do. The haunting and tortured vocals of Ville Valo are a perfect match for the down-tuned and dark rhythms of his backing band.

You know that Valo's love life is emotional torture with song titles like "Join Me in Death," "Buried Alive By Love," "Heartache Every Moment," "In Joy and Sorrow," "Your Sweet Six Six Six," "Poison Girl," and "When Love and Death Embrace." Nothing, I mean nothing beats a H.I.M. cover track. "Solitary Man" and "Wicked Game" are perfect examples. If you are one of the few that have hesitated to check out this band, now is the time, and this is the album."

--George Dionne



out of 5

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Monterey International Pop Festival
Razor & Tie Records 2007



[Monterey International Pop Festival](#)

Various Artists

Best Price **\$6.98**
 or Buy New **\$16.99**



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[Official Site](#)

"The Monterey International Pop Festival was held June 16-18, 1967. The event was put together to raise money for various charities and quite possibly inspired Woodstock years later. It was the first rock festival of its kind. This two disc collection highlights the cream of the crop during the three day event. The live recording is exceptionally clear (which I would question), and showcases the marquee names at the time, as well as future marquee players. Monterey marks the American debut of Jimi Hendrix, who is featured with fiery performances of "The Wind Cries Mary" and "Like a Rolling Stone." Janis Joplin (with Big Brother & The Holding Company) makes her major performance debut with her contributions "Down on Me" and "Ball in Chain."

Other heavy hitters include Jefferson Airplane, Otis Redding, The Who, The Mama's and the Papas, The Byrds, and Simon & Garfunkle. The event attracted over 200,000 people & the admission was \$1. What a difference from the corporate events of today, huh? The artists all worked for free, with the exception of sitar player Ravi Shankar. He walked away with \$3000. This collection is truly a piece of musical history and compassion when it was all about the music and not the all mighty dollar."

--George Dionne



out of 5

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Hope Floats: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
Capitol Records 2007



[Hope Floats](#)

Various Artists

Best Price **\$7.50**
 or Buy New **\$13.97**



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[Official Site](#)

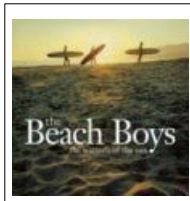
"Capitol Records reaches into their vault to expand the Soundtrack to the Sandra Bullock/Harry Connick Jr. love story Hope Floats (I assume an expanded DVD is on the way as well). Sheryl Crow ("In Need"), The Rolling Stones ("Honest I Do"), and Bryan Adams ("When You Love Someone") deliver solid rock ballad performances despite it not being their A-material. For the most part, the Soundtrack is a country ballad affair with sprinklings of pop (Barry Manilow) and R & B (The Temptations). This expanded edition includes six tracks that were not included in the original release; Barry Manilow – "Daybreak," The Temptations – "I Can't Get Next to You," Paul Davis – "Cool Night," Laura Harding – "Who Cares Anyway," and Dave Gruusin – "Justin & Birdie."

--George Dionne



out of 5

THE BEACH BOYS
The Warmth of the Sun
 Capitol Records 2007



[The Warmth of the Sun](#)

The Beach Boys

Best Price \$2.79
 or Buy New \$13.97



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[Official Site](#)

"I know what your thinking, 'Not another Beach Boys Collection?!' Yes folks it's true. I think this may actually mark their 100th collection of hits. Between different labels and versions releasing material, it's a little tough to tell anyway. Let's face it; no one defined the sounds of summer like The Beach Boys in the 60's. This collection focuses solely on their 'beach' or summer sounds. Excluded is material from the pinnacle Beach Boys album Pet Sounds, and probably any other Brian Wilson-penned progressive and experimental material.

If you grew up during that time, this collection of 28 songs is sure to take you back to a simpler time. For others out there it will remind you of your parent's old record collections. A lot of you will recall the music from a movie or television commercial. And then there are others who will say, 'who are the Beach Boys?' Shame on you, by the way. No matter how you slice it, The Beach Boys still remain a symbol of summer with there care-free songs, beautiful multi-part vocal harmonies, and relaxing melodies. Every generation should take the time to soak them in."

--George Dionne



out of 5

STEVIE NICKS
Crystal Visions: The Very Best Of
 Reprise Records 2007



[Crystal Visions - The Very](#)

Best of S...

Stevie Nicks

Best Price \$16.95
 or Buy New \$22.99



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[Official Site](#)

"Crystal Visions more or less condenses Stevie's 1998 box set Enchanted: The Works of Stevie Nicks into a one disc collection. Even though a three disc collection is shrunken into a one disc collection, it's enough material to please the not-so-die hard fan, and even the hardcore ones that don't want to haul around all those CDs. The standard hit material is included; "Edge of Seventeen," "Stop Draggin' My Heart Around," "Talk to Me," and "Stand Back."

I was also excited to find material that I had actually forgotten about that really kicked ass in the 80s: "I Can't Wait," "If Anyone Falls in Love," and "Rooms on Fire." Since Stevie's solo material isn't as abundant as her Fleetwood Mac material, she includes some live Mac material in the form of; "Silver Springs," "Dreams," "Rhiannon," and "Landslide." To round out the collection Nicks throws out a few of her own hits live. The CD/DVD version is by far the best choice, as the DVD includes all of Nicks' videos, complete with commentary."

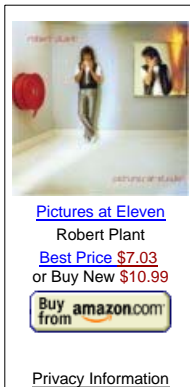
--George Dionne



out of 5

ROBERT PLANT
Pictures at Eleven [Remastered & Expanded]
Rhino Records 2007

"The debut solo album from Robert Plant gets the reissue treatment here. The CD features an introductory essay and two bonus cuts. Robert Plant is one of the few true legends of the music industry. It's just an amazing thing to see him fronting the biggest band of all time and then when that eminently successful run ends, he reinvents himself as a solo artist unafraid to try any musical idea that he comes across. Pictures At Eleven is definitely a musical portrait of an artist in transition from one stage of his career to another, but even that doesn't hold Plant back. The lead track "Burning Down One Side" still stands today as one of the best sounding tracks he's produced in his solo career. What puts this track even higher in my estimation is the fact that Phil Collins performs the drums. In fact he performs on all but two of the original track listing's songs, the now deceased Cozy Powell handles the other two tracks.



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[Official Site](#)

The guitar work and general overall wild vibe on "Mystery Title" makes it a standout for me. The song just bounces all over the musical landscape and it's quite the enjoyable ride. "Slow Dancer" gives you the first glimpses of Plant's use of Arabic sounds in his music. That is an influence that has continued throughout his solo material. "Moonlight In Samosa" has that moody atmospheric sound conjured up by the song title. I liked "Pledge Pin" as a whole, but I really dug the included saxophone sound. It really sold the song to me. I didn't really care for "Like I've Never Been Gone", so the inclusion of a live recording of the song alongside the original studio version did nothing for me.

The album has lots of musical ideas and notions to reel in the listener with nifty guitar work, pound rhythm section work, and of course the magic of Plant's vocals. The best thing is that this was only the beginning. He gets not only better as the albums progress, but also more important as a musical artist. As a longtime fan of his solo material I have to say the beginning is always the best place to start your appreciation of one of the rarest gems in the musical world."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5



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THE HORRORS
Strange House
Loog Records 2007

"This was something I just couldn't get into. Everything I have heard about them said they were rock, well when I listened to them I easily got the idea they were punk. Maybe my ears are bad, I don't know but this doesn't sound like rock to me. The music is uninteresting and mellow for the most part. I dislike the vocals on here as well. They are really wimpy. A terrible album in my eyes. But don't rely on my opinion, seems every other place has given them a good review; I don't see why. It is what it is though, I have my opinion, they have theirs, and you have yours"

--Derek Carey



out of 5

TEN
The Twilight Chronicles
Frontiers Records 2006



[Official Site](#)

"I wanted to be able to rave over this album, but I found that it simply didn't appeal to me all that much. I enjoyed "The Chronicles", "Hallowed Ground", and "Oblivion" immensely. The tracks are up-tempo and these are the songs where vocalist Gary Hughes shines the brightest. The guitar leads and solos from Chris Francis and John Halliwell are outstanding throughout most of the album. The problem I had with the album is that the rest of the vocal performance from Hughes struck me as remarkably bland. There wasn't a whole lot of vocal modulation in his delivery and it made of lot of the vocals just blend together for me. The three songs I mentioned above are great, but this CD ends up sounding rather repetitive after a while."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5

THE BAND
The Best Of: A Musical Journey
EMI Music Group 2007



[Official Site](#)

"Fresh off of their box set release, Ronnie Hawkins and company offer up a condensed version (on a different record label) for those of you who don't feel like hauling around the entire set when you're on the run. It may not be every song that The Band ever put out, but you're getting 19 of their most memorable tracks including "Who Do You Love" (Ronnie Hawkins & The Hawks), "The Weight," and "Stage Fright." Thrown in for good measure is a 1970 live track, and a couple of tunes The Band did with Bob Dylan."

--George Dionne



out of 5

PAULA ABDUL
Greatest Hits: Straight Up!
Virgin/EMI Records 2007



[Official Site](#)

"This updated version of the American Idol judge's back catalog is a guilty pleasure that should be consumed by all. Maybe the reason I think it's so great is because Paula's music was all over the radio and pretty much set the soundtrack for my high school years. But now that I think about it, it's probably because I had a HUGE crush on Paula back in the day. Did you see the videos for "Cold Hearted Snake" and "My Love is For Real?"

Paula wasn't the greatest singer, but she knew what was

hot at the time and ran with it. The music is still enjoyable as it was in the past, but probably with today's musical landscape, it is best enjoyed in small doses. After watching Paula on American Idol (and her strange behavior), plus seeing her on that Dr. Phil dating special, I think I might finally have a chance with her."

--George Dionne



out of 5



SUPER GEEK LEAGUE
Peppermint Rainbows
Self-Released 2007

"If you can get by the corny album cover and ridiculous song titles, you're going to find yourself some oddly addictive music. Super Geek League leaves no genre unturned and somehow makes it work. It's a bit too "out there" to put into words. If you're bold enough to give them a try, you won't be disappointed."

--George Dionne



out of 5

FIRE BUG
End of the World EP
Buddah Belt Records 2007

"The Los Angeles based quartet's EP is far too short even for an EP. I like what I hear on the first three tracks, it's got a nice slow burning rock vibe that increases in intensity as each song progresses. Vocalist Juliette Tworsey has a phenomenal voice, though the too repetitive title track doesn't show off her lyrical ability. The band's influences and sound is deeply rooted in the 70's hard rock sound with that era's psychedelic flourishes and some blues thrown into the mix as well. I really like the use of slide guitar from guitarist Jules Shapiro on "Forever Won't Wait."



[Official Site](#)

The drawback to the album is definitely the length or the lack thereof of the disc. The four tracks are actually 3 originals and a radio edit version of "End Of The World." The running time is just a tad over 15 minutes. The saving grace to that complaint is the song "Paradise" which is simply phenomenal. I would buy this on the strength of that track alone.

"Paradise" and "Forever Won't Wait" are far and away better tracks lyrically. The interest in Fire Bug is definitely there for me. The band has a great and fresh rock vibe that is rooted strongly in substance over flash. I can't wait to hear more from the foursome! Oh, and while it can't be figured into this review, the group's [MySpace](#) page has three tracks NOT on this disc."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5

SLIDESHOW
S/T
Self-Released 2007



[Official Site](#)

"The British rockers certainly know how to craft a rich musical landscape. The self-titled 7-track album has outstanding music. A mixture of influences form their rock and classic rock sound. Two tracks in particular stand out for me. "Goodbye" and "Time Away" are far and away the most musically aggressive numbers. The rapid fire vocal delivery from singer Jason Craig really makes me like what he's doing on this type of song. The band's attacking sound on each track makes me want to hear more in this vein of songwriting from them.

Sadly, the other five tracks are a bit more sedate and I found the vocals to be more overly emotive than I would normally prefer to hear. Craig's voice on the 5 tracks in question comes off as melodramatics I would expect to hear from the pathetic modern rock groups inundating US radio these days. I think if they stuck to the more high energy numbers like "Goodbye" and "Time Away" the band could really have something. I don't know if it's a coincidence or not but these two songs are the only two that are featured on their website as well."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5

GENIUS
Episode 3: The Final Surprise
Frontiers Records 2007



[Official Site](#)

"The term 'don't judge a book (or in this case album) by its cover' can be used here, although not in the good way. When I first saw this CD, the cover design was really cool and the song titles seemed really interesting and I thought this would be one epic album. Looks can be deceiving. The album is musically driven with lyrics providing a story and this being the final chapter of the entire story. Only problem is the whole thing is just decent. Nothing is amazing. Nothing is what I thought it would be. Though each song has its own sound, the entire album gets lost with it all and makes for an uninteresting listen"

-- Derek Carey



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

GYPSY CARNS
Gospel Train Coming
Musark Records 2006

"Okay, you can officially call me absolutely gobsmacked. When I first got this CD to review, I wasn't all that enthused because of the gospel music/religious aspect. When I finally put the disc on and listened, I was blown away by the acoustic delta blues sound and the unbelievably powerful raspy voice of Carns. The title

track is probably the best song for me on the disc, but each song really has it's own life. For me, leaving aside the religious aspect of the lyrics, I just really appreciated how good the album sounded in all regards."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5

SENIOR DISCOUNT
There Were Four Who Tried
 Self-Released 2006



[Official Site](#)

"I'm always skeptical when I get some local band's self-released album. Chances are you're going to get a horribly produced piece of crap. I was quite surprised, no shocked, at how great the latest release by Rhode Island's Senior Discount was. This punk rock affair comes at you hard and heavy and never lets up till the very end. The band also doesn't take themselves or life too seriously, as most of their songs will have you rolling on the floor with laughter, but at the same time saying, 'that's so true.'"

--George Dionne



out of 5

[Angular Perceptions](#)
 Thought Chamber
 Best Price \$11.52
 or Buy New \$16.98

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THOUGHT CHAMBER
Angular Perceptions
 Inside Out Music 2007

"Everything you'd come to expect from a progressive metal album; technical arrangements, beautiful melodies, sudden shifting tempos, thought-provoking lyrics, and long (sometimes drawn out) instrumentals. You may not know Thought Chamber's mastermind Michael Harris right now, but this album is sure to make the prog-metal world take notice."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

ROBOT GOES HERE
The Byte is in My Blood
 Columbia/Legacy Records 2006

"A "punk" rock "singer" and PhD Candidate at Harvard (do those two even go together) decides to take a bigger slice of the pie by eliminating the need for a backing band and using his trusty IBM as his rhythm section. The result is a computer nerd's wet dream, but a rock fan's nightmare.

Essentially the album is more suited for a dance club or house party, with a cover of AC/DC's "Back in Black" being the album's sole connection to rock. It may just be the worst cover of that song I've ever heard. And I've

heard all the sub par versions put out by Bruce Kulick and Cleopatra Records. Some people have way too much spare time (and money to burn)."

--George Dionne

ZERO out of 5

FAIR WARNING
Brother's Keeper
Frontiers Records 2006



[Brother's Keeper](#)

Fair Warning

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or Buy New [\\$28.99](#)



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[Official Site](#)

"The melodic rockers have released their first new album in 6 years. I found that I really liked the song "Wasted Time." It's a nice mid tempo track and the vocals are the best set of the entire CD. I thought the vocals were a bit over produced in spots, particularly the first five tracks. This was a shame because I liked Tommy Heart's singing on the Soul Doctor debut album.

For me, this album was adequately put together. The music and lyrics are fine, but I never really found myself truly getting into the disc. It struck me as just one more melodic rock album from yet another melodic rock band. I guess it's the Nickelback-Creed disease of the European melodic rock variety."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5



[This Sinking Ship](#)

Smoke or Fire

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SMOKE OR FIRE
Sinking Ship
Columbia/Legacy Records 2006

"This is an album of nothing interesting or exciting. The songs fall into one another and sound the same in my thoughts. I see no sense of creativity or originality with anything on this album."

-- Derek Carey



out of 5



[Lethal Agenda](#)

Temple of Brutalit...

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or Buy New [\\$15.98](#)



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TEMPLE OF BRUTALITY
Lethal Agenda
Demolition Records 2007

"Stet Howland of WASP, David Ellefson of Megadeth, Peter Scheithauer of Belladonna, and Todd Barnes of 13-A; on paper Temple of Brutality sounds like a heavy combination. On their debut album Lethal Agenda you can't deny that they ARE a heavy combination as powerful riffs, pounding drums, thumping bass, and furious vocals tear your eardrums apart.


However, once you feel the burn from the opening track "Lethal Agenda," you'll swear to God that you're feeling (and hearing) the same exact burn over and over again until it's over. You're sure to get a kick out of the bonus

video that was apparently shot in someone's backyard."

-- George Dionne



out of 5



[Van Morrison At The Movies](#)
Van Morrison
Best Price \$7.19
or Buy New \$13.97

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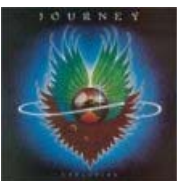
VAN MORRISON
At the Movies: Soundtrack Hits
Manhattan/EMI Records 2007

"I have never been a big Van Morrison fan. Well, that's not exactly true it seems. After listening to this collection of Morrison's movie contributions I realized I know more of his songs than I thought. I can't say I listen to them over and over again, but when songs like "Gloria," "Baby, Please Don't Go," "Moondance," "Wild Night," "Brown Eyed Girl," "Days Like This," and "Have I told You Lately" come on the radio, I'm not exactly changing the station. I may actually remember a few of these from the movies that they're taken from. This may as well have been a greatest hits collection, because each song is a winner."

-- George Dionne



out of 5



[Evolution](#)
Journey
Best Price \$6.43
or Buy New \$9.97

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JOURNEY
Evolution [Remastered]
Columbia/Legacy Records 2006

"Journey are arguably the kings of 80's arena rock and Evolution is packed full of reasons why. "Too Late," "Lovin', Touchin', Squeezin'," "City Of The Angels" and "Just The Same Way" are but a handful of classic Journey tracks on the disc. It's always great to listen to the voice of Steve Perry and the anthemic music from Neal Schon, Ross Valory, Greg Rolie and Steve Smith. You may know what you are going to get when it comes to Journey's music, but they are so good at it, it doesn't matter.

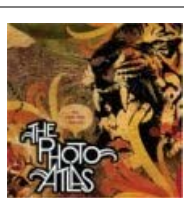
The music is great, which makes me wonder why other than remastering the sound, there's nothing new included on the disc.

I don't buy CDs for rare photos: I buy them for the music. The album would be a great way to introduce potential new fans to Journey, but longtime fans will surely be disappointed to find themselves buying the same album all over again, remastered or not. The rating for the music is 4 ½ out of 5, but my dissatisfaction with the lack of new material makes the overall grade a bit lower."

-- Jay Roberts



out of 5



[No, Not Me, Never](#)

The Photo Atlas

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or Buy New [\\$9.97](#)

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THE PHOTO ATLAS
No, Not Me, Never
Stolen Transmission Records 2006

"There's a sad, sad trend in rock music today. Apparently if you can write catchy hooks, but can't sing for shit, you can get someone to put out your album. Maybe it's just me, but I think that a band's 'vocalist' should be able to carry a tune. I'm tired of these whiney, voice-cracking, and screaming at the top of my lungs 'vocalists' that think what their doing is singing."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Very Best Of](#)

Doobie Brothers

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or Buy New [\\$22.99](#)

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[Official Site](#)

THE DOOBIE BROTHERS
The Very Best Of
Rhino Records 2006

"You have to hand it to the folks at Rhino Records. They ALWAYS deliver the goods when it comes to greatest hits albums. With The Very Best of the Doobie Brothers you get 33 tracks from the legendary R & B influenced California rockers. The hits just go on and on with tracks "Listen to the Music," "China Groove," "Takin' It to the Streets," "It Keeps You Runnin'," "What a Fool Believes," and "Minute by Minute." The list goes on and on. There's no doubt these tracks are already burned into you brain from commercials, radio stations, weddings, office parties, and even elevators. Whether laying down guitar heavy hooks or pounding away on the keys with some bluesy soulful music, The Doobie Brothers always kept it interesting, no matter who was behind the microphone."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[The Gathering](#)

Jorn

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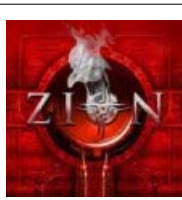
JORN
The Gathering
Frontiers Records 2007

"In addition to a covers album ([read CD review](#)), Jorn Lande delves into his vault to resurrect some forgotten favorites, as well as re-working a few here in there. The Gathering focuses on Lande's pre-Masterplan solo career, and boasts a sixteen song collection full of melodic power and melody that will make any rock fan drool with envy. If vocals aren't your thing, there's lots of thunderous riffs to melt your ear drums as well."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Zion](#)

Zion

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or Buy New \$28.49



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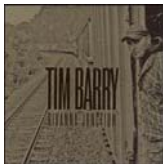
ZION
S/T
Frontiers Records 2007

"Former Alias vocalist Freddy Curci returns with an all-new backing band. You may remember Alias from their late 80s super-mega-hit ballad "More Than Words Can Say." Curci and company try to stay true to the rock formula of the 80s with the lyrics and arraignments on this album, but the band deliver with a more contemporary and modern sound. The result is really a by-the-numbers melodic rock affair, with a few songs that you'll carry with you for a bit. It's nowhere near the appeal that Alias had, but the album is no slouch either."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

TIM BARRY
Rivanna Junction
Suburban Home Records 2006

"Tim Barry is a pissed off southern rocker with a chip on his shoulder and an acoustic guitar in his hands. His vocals are nothing to write home about, but you can't deny that his words of pain and hatred are born from his heart and experiences. He backs up his statements with strong and angry emotions. If you're in a bad mood you'll probably make a connect, but if things are alright in your world, Barry may just bring you down."

--George Dionne



out of 5



[Official Site](#)

KINGFIELD
Letters Post Mortem
Blue Worm Records 2006

"Hip-hop bass player turned rock auteur delivers an extremely personal account of his battle with cancer and how his entire world falls apart around him on his debut album. Each driving rock track delivers a whole host of emotions. You'll be sad, you'll be angry, and you'll be amazed that Brett Johnson survived it all and prevailed. Sonically Letters Post Mortem falls in line with the modern and alternative rock genres."

--George Dionne



out of 5

ROBERT RANDOLPH & THE FAMILY BAND***Colorblind*****Warner Bros. Records 2006**

"The rock, funk, and blues are on full display with the latest release from phenomenal guitarist Robert Randolph and his Family Band. *Colorblind* shows the band in top notch form with some rip roaring guitar rock and sly funk infused rhythms. The band is joined with a guest appearance from guitar god Eric Clapton on a cover of the Byrds song "Jesus Is Just Alright." It's a rollicking good time as Randolph and Clapton trade of licks and lyrical turns. Dave Matthews and Leela James are among the other guest players on the album, but it's the Clapton collaboration that shines the brightest.

The use of a huge backing vocal arrangement on the album elevates the songs that much more. It gives the song arrangements a fuller sound and jacks up the intensity level of songs. The opening song "Ain't Nothing Wrong With That" is a lively combination of the rock and funk grooves with a sweet guitar riff giving the song that important rock and roll edge. It was without a doubt my own personal favorite track on the disc. "Deliver Me" gets your foot tapping, but there are instances where the vocals get drowned out by the music. The guitar lines in "Angels" were also something of note.

I wasn't crazy about the song "Thankful 'N Thoughtful." It just kind of meandered about for me. "Thrill Of It" and "Blessed" came off as the weaker sisters of the album's tracks. The music is superb. I think Randolph comes off well vocally. There's a lot of character in his vocal performance, he owns the song whether it's one of his own compositions or a cover song. Marcus Randolph is fantastic behind the drum kit providing his own unique beats and rhythms to form the foundation for the songs.

All in all, this is one darn good album, despite a couple of songs that did nothing for me. Robert Randolph & The Family Band know their business. If they keep turning out albums like *Colorblind*, business will always be good."

-- Jay Roberts

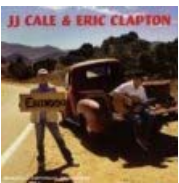


out of 5



[Colorblind](#)
Robert Randolph & ...
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[The Road to Escondido](#)
J.J. Cale, Eric Cl...
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JJ CALE & ERIC CLAPTON***Road to Escondido*****Reprise/Warner Bros. Records 2006**

"After years of honoring each other's work, most notably Clapton covering Cale's "After Midnight" and "Cocaine," the two blues guitar greats team up to create a fresh album together. The result is true to both legends' blues roots, but unfortunately lacks any energy or punch to make any of the songs interesting. I don't know if it's because they're getting on in years or they forgot how to kick it up a notch, but somehow I believe that their ride to Escondido is in an old Cadillac traveling at 20mph in the fast lane with their blinker on."

--George Dionne



out of 5

ERIK NORLANDER
Hommage Symphonique
Think Tank Media 2006



[Hommage Symphonique](#)

Erik Norlander

Best Price \$4.00
 or Buy New \$16.98

Buy from amazon.com

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[Official Site](#)

"In keeping with longtime collaborator Lana Lane's **Gemini** theme, keyboardist (and Lana's husband) Erik Norlander releases his own covers album. Instead of your average, run-of-the-mill covers album, Norlander takes the unique approach of transforming underground prog-rock classic of the seventies and turning them into a fusion of symphonic jazz. If you've heard Norlander's work with Lana Lane, then you know this is they style and the music that has influenced his keyboard playing.

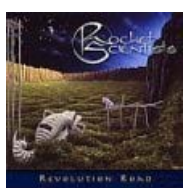
Even though this is a Norlander affair, vocalist Kelly Keeling delivers some of the smoothest melodic tones when Erik isn't tearing apart his keyboard. Fans of Erik's work in Lana Lane may be a little put off by the slight change of style, but fans of 70s prog-rock will be astonished at how Norlander has reshaped these underground classics and made them his own."

--George Dionne



out of 5

ROCKET SCIENTISTS
Revolution Road
Think Tank Media 2006



[Revolution Road](#)

Rocket Scientists

Best Price \$9.49
 or Buy New \$19.98

Buy from amazon.com

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[Official Site](#)


"Apparently two new albums this year wasn't enough for Lana Lane keyboardist Erik Norlander. After a seven year hiatus, Norlander reunites with another one of other side projects, Rocket Scientist, for a two CD release. In the liner notes, it was vocalist Mark McCrite that laid the foundation for this release as he passed a CDR to Norlander and company entitled "Unfinished Business."

Drawing upon that disc as a blueprint, Rocket Scientists have crafted an eighteen song collection that ranges from progressive to rock, from experimental to fusion, and from melodic to grandiose. If you listen to all 18 tracks with no interruption, the progressive elements tend to wear you down a bit. Overall, Revolution Road serves as an example that a lot of great music never makes it to the radio—it's in the underground."

--George Dionne



out of 5



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PILLAR
The Reckoning
Flicker Records 2006

"Crap. This is pretty much a business made band, that's what I get when I listened to them. Similar to other 'made' acts like Crossfade and such. No good music equals no good band, and that's what this is right here."

--Derek Carey



out of 5

VAEDA
State of Nature
Playtime Records 2006



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"Vaeda's State Of Nature is a crackling rock/metal combination that spends most of its time whipping from one breakneck number to the next. The songs combine powerful vocals, ripping guitar work and the always important rock solid rhythmic foundation. While the vocals are a bit more screaming than singing in the early part of the album, I did enjoy the vocal work a lot. Ian Cole lets his voice soar high, but wisely knows when to pull back and soft pedal the singing. The 12 songs are made up of 10 rockers and two mid tempo numbers. The album closing mid tempo track "Cacophony" was one I didn't care for all that much. I thought it made the album go out with a bit of a whimper than a roar.

I did like the other midtempo song "1.25" though. "Kneejerk" has everything going for it. It's got a great pop rock hook to the song. All of it goes for naught when a horrendous ending ruins it. Meanwhile, back at the rock front, "All For You" and "Bite My Tongue" are superb cuts, with the former being worthy of heavy rock radio rotation. The best song on the disc, however, is "Son Of The Viper" which simply kills from opening to closing note.

All in all, this is a pretty solid album. Any band that can combine the influences of Nirvana, Pennywise and Living Colour into a workable musical collaboration has to really have something going for it."

--Jay Roberts

5 Questions with Vaeda



out of 5



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GLENN DANZIG
Black Aria II
Evilive Records 2006

"This entire album is just sounds. Interesting, huh? I'm sitting there waiting through the intro and half of the first track for music and/or singing to appear and NOTHING! I do say that some of the sounds incorporated on here are pretty cool, but mostly it's just "scary" noises and what not. Nothing that appeals to me."

--Derek Carey



out of 5

PEAL
Beautiful Baby Elephant
Self-Released 2006



[Beautiful Baby Elephant](#)

Peal

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"The acoustic powered rock from Peal certainly is a breath of fresh air from a crowded field of modern day rockers. While it might be easier to dismiss the band as a lighter version cousin of bands like Nickelback and the like, you'd be doing them and yourself a great disservice.

The smooth direct vocal delivery from Tim Wilsbach dovetails nicely with the guitar work from Jeff Libey. Wilsbach's lyrics are a cut above the standard. In reading the promo press included with the review copy, I made note of their influences.

While I hear a bit of each cited group (U2, Toad the Wet Sprocket, etc.) I also thought of Toto for a minute or two. This is because there doesn't seem to be a note on the album that isn't designed to get the song to wherever it's going. On songs like "Maria" I also was reminded of the duo Billy Pilgrim. The album features 11 songs, including the "hidden" track "Lines", and each one is a keeper. You've got a good combination of music and words here. They don't get fancy and extend songs for the sake of extending them, but it works. A nice piece of work from Peal!"

--Jay Roberts



out of 5

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