

by Mike Perciaccante/Christine Connallon

New & Noteworthy: The Best New & Remastered CDs

Each month the mailman, UPS, FedEx and DHL bring me a treasure trove of new CDs as well as a bunch re-mastered/re-issued classic releases. Yes, "treasure trove" and "a bunch" are technical terms. Well, actually, they're industry terms. However you look at it, every day is Christmas. In reality it's an embarrassment of riches. I'm not going to complain. I love it.

However, with each package that I get, I know that there's some work that needs to be done. In order to properly do my job, I have to listen to each CD at least two or three times. I have to decide if it is a good release and even more importantly – good or bad – should I review it. That's a lot of listening in the car, on the I-POD and on the stereo in the house.

Once I decide on the discs I want to review, I have to then put words on paper. Hopefully the words are coherent and my arguments are well thought-out. And, hopefully you, the reader, like what I have written.

This month, I'll take a look at eleven of the best recent and up-coming CDs. So here goes...I've decided to separate the CDs by genre. Why? Because it makes it easier for me and hopefully for you to check out the eleven albums...

Rock

It has been thirty-six years since Jim Morrison died in Paris. Even after all these years, the furor surrounding The Doors has yet to subside. And with good reason; there seems to be a new release every year. Rhino Handmade and The Doors own label, Bright Midnight, continue to release live performances culled from the band's archives. The latest, *Live In Boston* features two shows recorded at the Boston Arena on April 10, 1970. Morrison was in rare form. Though flying high on booze (and who knows what else) Morrison was in rare form. Leading keyboardist Ray Manzarek, drummer John Densmore and guitarist Robby Krieger and the audience filled with devoted fans a memorable romp which includes "Roadhouse Blues," "Light My Fire," "When The Music's Over."

"Mystery Train" Morrison is at the top of his powers. Not only is the music (recorded, mixed and mastered by Bruce Botnick) sonically superior, the spoken word interludes are riveting. Featuring almost fifty tracks -- all but two of which were previously unreleased, *Live In Boston* is a time machine capable of bringing the listener back to the summer of 1970.

Bruce Springsteen's new release *Live in Dublin* recorded with The Sessions Band is his second foray into the world of folk music. The live companion to 2006's *We Shall Overcome: The Seeger Sessions*, *Live in Dublin* features 23 tracks melding folk music with Springsteen's own cannon. The collection which features songs from the Seeger Sessions CD is complimented nicely by Springsteen's own "Atlantic City," "Open All Night" and "Highway Patrolman" from Nebraska; "Further On (Up The Road)" from *The Rising*; "If I Should Fall Behind" from *Lucky Town*, "American Land" one of the bonus tracks from the Seeger Sessions Deluxe Edition, "Growin' Up" and "Blinded By The Light" from *Greeting From Asbury Park, New Jersey* and "Long Time Comin'" from *Devils And Dust*.

By mixing his own songs with classics and traditionals such as "Old Dan Tucker," "We Shall Overcome," "Pay Me My Money Down," and "This Little Light Or Mine" Springsteen has succeeded in melding and meshing his history with OUR history – the collective history of America. And he has done it well. Recorded on the final show of the long tour, the 2-CD set is pure American Music incorporating folk, blues, gospel, country, rock swing, a touch of Dixieland and everything in-between.

Pat Travers left Canada for London at the age of 20. Once in London he got signed to Polydor Records and began releasing albums. Throughout the late-70s and early to mid-80s Travers released the classics *Pat Travers*, *Makin' Magic*, *Putting It Straight*, *Heat In The Street*, *Crash & Burn*, *Radio Active*, *Black Pearl* and a few live albums. In 1984, following *Hot Shot*, Travers decided to take a break from

FRANK BLACK

Best Of Frank Black 93-03

Cooking Vinyl

Pixie's frontman, Black has finally released a chronological anthology of his best solo recordings beginning with his eponymously titled debut through *Show Me Your Tears*. The tracks on this 2-CD set run the gamut of musical styles ranging from surf rock to heavy metal, to Beatlesque pop to new wave. Disc 1 features 22 "greatest hits" and a brand new Black Francis track, "Threshold Apprehension," from his forthcoming album, *Bluefinger*. Disc 2 is comprised of performances from last fall's solo tour. Fans may spend time arguing about the track selection, because Black has so many good songs. Like it or not these are the one's he's chosen. For neophytes, this collection is an outstanding introduction.

MARILLION

Somewhere Else

MVD Audio

The progressive rockers from Buckingham, England have released their 14th CD. On *Somewhere Else*, the band has minimized their sound and as a result, has crafted their most accessible album ever featuring wonderful melodies, excellent musicianship and songs that grow on the listener. *Somewhere Else*'s best tracks are the excellent "The Other Half," the beautiful and melancholy "The Last Century for Man," "Faith," "The Wound" and the title track. This CD is unique in the fact that it was recorded by a band that after 25 years is still growing and stretching for more.

TOM PETTY

Highway Companion (deluxe edition)

American Recordings/Warner Bros.

On this CD originally released in July 2006, Tom Petty crafted a record that had travel in mind. *Highway Companion* was a collection of road tunes about the passing of time. Though it can be described as the soundtrack to a good drive, it is also an album about getting older. The best tracks are the title song, the bluesy "Saving Grace," and the very personal "Square One." The Deluxe Edition features faux leather packaging, two postcards, and four bonus tracks – "Home," "Around the Roses," "Big

GC MAGAZINE (DALLAS)