

### **'Brick and Mortar and Love,' (MVDvisual, HHH 1/2)**

This DVD tells the story of ear X-tacy Records, a legendary independent Louisville, Ky., recorded music store as it struggles to survive in the changing music industry. People on the Coast know how valuable an independent record store is now that we don't have one, right?

Interviews with owner John Timmons, store staff, musicians and many independent store owners from across the country will make viewers want to support stores like T-Bones in Hattiesburg where we spent a great Record Store Day 2013.

### **'The Anchor & The Sail,' Jessica Campbell (Little London Records, HHHH)**

This April 30 CD, produced by Cason Cooley, is the follow-up to Nashville-based singer-songwriter Jessica Campbell's Great Escape album of a few years back. Cooley adds keyboards, programming and other elements to a tight studio ensemble including drummer Will Sayles, bassist Matt Pierson, electric guitar/banjoist Tyler Burkum, fiddler Eleonore Denic and others. Jessica's lead and background vocals are deliciously effective on some tunes. Grammy-winning songwriter Dave Barnes adds vocals to "Mississippi."

Highlights include the catchy, banjo-driven "Time," the witty lyrics throughout, the free-flowing title song and the lovely "Sunnyside."

Those who love singer/songwriters who bridge between different genres will enjoy this one.

### **'Above,' Mad Season (Columbia/Legacy, HHHH 1/2)**

This deluxe edition (available since April 2 in physical/digital formats plus a 12-inch Record Store Day vinyl edition) contains the ill-fated super group's lone studio album on CD one. A second CD has unreleased studio tracks from their unfinished second album with new lyrics written and sung by Mark Lanegan and a DVD of the band's last live performance.

Mad Season was formed in 1994 as a blues-based project with Alice In Chains vocalist Layne Staley, Pearl Jam guitarist Mike McCready, Screaming Trees drummer/percussionist Barrett Martin and Chicago blues/Walkabouts bassist John "Baker" Saunders. Tragically, both Layne (2002) and Saunders (1999) died of overdoses.

Disc one highlights include "November Hotel," an instrumental that shows the power of the guitar/drum/bass section; plus the haunting hit "River Of Deceit," the powerful bonus track "Locomotive," the downbeat "Wake Up," Martin's cool drumming throughout (and his booklet notes), a blistering cover of Lennon's "I Don't Wanna Be a Soldier," and the bluesiest song, "Artificial Red," where McCready's guitar and Staley's voice are spotlighted.

The "Live At The Moore" set shows what a powerful stage show Mad Season had in terms of what most of the mid-'90s Seattle bands were doing: in other words, there wasn't much pacing or showiness, but the album's songs were well represented with good sound reinforcement but crummy lighting. The footage from New Years' Eve 1995 at Seattle's RKCNDY and more round out the package. Grunge/blues fans who can understand the blending of those genres will dig this one.

### **'Go All The Way,' The McCrary Sisters (McC Records, HHHHH)**

This April 30 CD is the McCrary Sisters' follow-up to their 2011 debut, Our Journey, which wound up on my Top 10 Plus list. Ann, Deborah, Regina and Alfreda are joined here by producers Kevin McKendree and Tommy Sims plus lead guitarists Rob McNelley, Akil Thompson & Sims, Demarco Johnson, keyboardists Jeremy Nixon and McKendree, organist Dwan Hill, drummer Derek Phillips and more. The music here befits the daughters of the Rev. Samuel McCrary, but is a genre-jumping sack of songs.

Highlights include Alfreda and Kevin's funkafied "Come On," Gary Nicholson's bluesy "Skin Deep," Regina and Colin Linden's haunting "Hum and Moan," Regina and Kevin's "Hello Jesus," an adaptation of my Mom's favorite hymn, and many others. Fans of good gospel music will dig this album.

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