



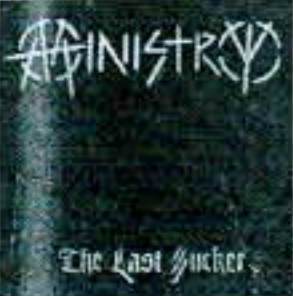
**BATTLELORE**  
Evernight  
Napalm

Once again, Finland's Battlelore bring Tolkien's Middle Earth to life with an enchanting musical journey on their newest album, *Evernight*. This time, the journey is even more dynamic, more powerful than their previous (and still excellent) albums. "Ocean's Elysium" has as many moves and moods as the ocean itself. The dangerous "Beneath The Waves" weaves a sordid tale of how people can be led astray by tapping into their greed. "We Are The Legions" invokes the power of ancient deities. The ethereal "Longing Horizon" is tinged with regret. "Summon The Wolves" is absolutely ferocious. "The Cloak & Dagger" has timeless qualities. (Athena)



**EINSTUERZENDE NEUBAUTEN**  
Palast Der Republik (DVD)  
MVD

Here's something Neubauten fans have been waiting for, a live DVD. This recent concert is beautifully filmed in the most fitting of locations: the ruins of the former Parliament building of the now non-existent East Germany. Yes, "Haus Der Luege" is on the track list. Expect a wonderful opportunity to see the band in action, which is something American fans only rarely get a chance to see. Blixa works his magic through pipes, metal, hammers, and his almost-trademarked evil vocals. This DVD is stunning and spans their entire career. Featured tracks include: "Haus Der Luege," "Dead Friends," and "Alles". (Poseidon)



**MINISTRY**  
The Last Sucker  
13th Planet / Megaforce

The day after receiving *The Last Sucker* for review, I learned of the death of bassist Paul Raven (Ministry). As a long-time Ministry fan, listening to this final album delivers bittersweet emotions. As a ferocious political "tribute" album, Jourgensen & company hold no punches while standing up to Washington DC. Laying it all on the line, the concept is blunt and the music is in-your-face. Knowing that this is the last Ministry album ever will leave listeners feeling like GW himself launched an ICBM at your stereo. Raven, you will be missed; as will the timely yet eternal music of Ministry. Keep your eyes on 13th Planet Records, as Jourgensen is not quite finished with us just yet. (Sonya)



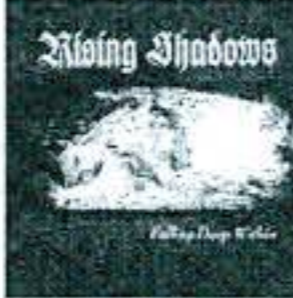
**NAGLFAR**  
Harvest  
Century Media

Sweden's Naglfar rush to usher in Ragnarok as they wield the Grim Reaper's scythe to gather souls in their *Harvest*. Instead of utilizing the fingernails and toenails of the dead like the mythological vessel, this warship was forged from a combination of Melodic Black Metal and Death Metal into a formidable sonic weapon indeed. The entire album shines from start to finish, so it's extremely hard to pick highlights - razor-sharp fretwork and demonic shrieks are superimposed over ominous foundations throughout. "The Darkest Road" is very addictive albeit desolate. The fiery, frightening "Feeding Moloch" is sure to give the listener goose bumps. (Athena)



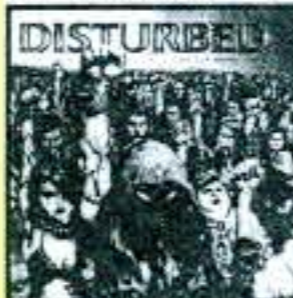
**SKINNY PUPPY**  
Mythmaker  
MSO PR

Not to rub it in to those who could not make the trip earlier this year, but Skinny Puppy's performance of songs from this latest album was awesome in ways print space will not allow me to describe. *Mythmaker* is full start to finish with finely polished orchestrations that will engage nearly every corner of your brain, my favorites (only if forced to choose) would be "Politikil," "Pasturn," and "Magnifishit." In true form, Skinny Puppy continues to evolve in sound and style, while maintaining the brute candidness of subject and thought-provocation they have become well respected for. Not to be missed. (Jessika)



**RISING SHADOWS**  
Falling Deep Within  
Twilight

This CD elicits the strong cranial phenomena of extra sensory perception. In base terms it is transcending, meditative, mysterious and somewhat eerie. Within the limited scope of self described retail description you could easily confine this to the "Gothic" section, but beyond its restrictive categorization unfurls a world all its own. Linda-Li Dahlin's voice is akin to the spectral siren serenading her lost love atop a fog enshrouded ocean embankment. Sole musical arranger Fredrik Klingwall must be channeling some long deceased classical composer because such songs as "Embraced By The Shadows" and "Kiss Of Treachery And Absolution" retain that imperial, erudite spirit found amongst the passages of the most elite of paramours, definitely a rewarding listening experience. (Toe Knee)



**DISTURBED**  
Ten Thousand Fists  
Reprise

Disturbed issue a Call to Arms to their legions of fans to defiantly raise their fists in the air and lash out at the wrongs in the world on both a personal and a global level. There's definitely no room for complacency on their third album, *Ten Thousand Fists!* Just because this is a catchy, melodic Nu Metal offering, it doesn't lack an ounce of the anger and aggression found in some of the more extreme elements of the Metal subgenres. They kick Genesis' "Land Of Confusion" up another aggressive notch. "Sons Of Plunder" kicks serious ass! Great album! (Athena)



**POD**  
As Lonely As Dave Bowman  
Projekt

Inspired by the films "2001" and "2010", Projekt Records' Sam Rosenthal has created an ambient masterpiece with this 5 track release. Expect the unexpected, as this is in this reviewer's humble opinion, his best work since the last Black Tape For A Blue Girl Album *Halo Star*. The production is spot on. The melodies are heart-wrenching and hypnotizing. The soundscapes are overwhelming, multi-dimensional, and thick with sorrow and melancholy. The music fits the album title with grace and symmetry. And yes, this CD syncs perfectly with the second half of 2001. Believe me, I know. (Poseidon)



**HANNAH FURY**  
Through The Gash  
MellowTraumatic

Maybe it's just me, but the image of a doll-eyed temptress in pink, bearing a knife behind her back and a sugar-sweetened song of loving revenge on her tongue, wore the nap off her velvet some time ago. So how does Hannah Fury make it beautiful to be a broken, innocent-looking but dangerous doll again? This is a fantastic album, seductive and breathtaking from the very start. Fury's soothing, caramelized vocals turn trickily from lullabies into cold blades and luscious hisses, and her eloquent, expansive piano music whirls up a cotton candy laced with aching nostalgia. There's nothing for it but to yield. I almost wish I could go back to being naive enough to love this even more. (Carolee)



**WITHIN TEMPTATION**  
The Heart Of Everything  
Roadrunner

Dutch band Within Temptation take us on a magical journey inside the world of the role-playing game "Chronicles Of The Spellborn". In enchanted lands called The Shards, two races - Humans and Daevi - fight for supremacy. But the storyline that weaves itself through the songs on this beautiful Symphonic Gothic Metal album tells the bittersweet tale of a forbidden love between a human and a daevi. The songs "The Howling" and "Sounds of Freedom" were actually recorded as promotional material for the videogame. Life Of Agony's Keith Caputo performs guest vocals in "What Have You Done". The frenzied "Final Destination" is gripping. (Athena)



**PAUL MERCER**  
Ghosts

Electronicvoicephenomena.com  
Performing solo, violinist Paul Mercer takes more risks than he once did as a member of the Changelings. Part of the curiosity of *Ghosts* is how many different musical sounds can be coaxed from the violin. "Trains," especially, is evocative not only of the actual sound of a train in motion on the tracks, but the emotional ambiance of traveling -- the anticipation of arrival, the lassitude of the between-time, and a sense of imminent change. "Frost," rimed with texture, isn't as cold as its name implies, and the "St. Teresa" series is interestingly strong and urgent. The album is a series of framed moments rather than a package of individually wrapped ideas, but it's also more alive than a gallery of static images. (Carolee)



**PURR MACHINE**  
Starry  
No Bliss Lost

What happens when a former Kommunity FK member teams up with a former Caterwaul member? Well, don't expect it to sound like either of their formers. Betsy Martin has an incredibly seductive and charming voice, thick with crackle and breath. It carries beautifully atop a wall of distant noise samples and Church-esque music. They have a true gift for making atmospheric seduction something tangible that you can wrap around yourself, like a short-circuiting electric blanket. Don't let the first few seconds of the song fool you. This album is nothing short of amazing. (Poseidon)



**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Darkest Labyrinth  
Blood/Cure

Whether for those already familiar with the current visual band scene, or those merely just beginning to explore the decadence and glamour of Japanese Goth, this compilation will serve to catch you up to date and expose you to new and exciting artists from the scene all in just around an hour's time. Featuring well-established bands such as Blood, *Darkest Labyrinth* also boasts such titles as "Existe" by Virgins O.R. Pigeons, "Bordeaux After Midnight" by TheCandySpookyTheatre, and "Favorite Song" by Suicide Ali. Twelve bands in all, this album surely has a perfect cut for everyone. Definitely give it a listen! (Jessika)



**SOPHE LUX**  
Waking The Mystics  
Zarathustra

This album goes through so many mood changes, sometimes during the unfolding of a song, that it's refreshingly difficult to pin down. Swooping vocals and waltzing rhythms make it almost otherworldly, but not as much as it could be, as it's grounded by toe-tapping drumbeats and guitars of many textures. Swelling with understated drama, vivid tracks like the opener "Target Market" and the epic "Marie Antoinette Robot 2073" pull surprising personality changes; funky, spacey "Stella" channels Kate Bush-like curiosity and psychedelic bass. Singer Gwynneth Haynes conveys confidence, affection and wisdom, while rare touches like the snare drum, saxophone and accordion contribute to the starchy dance. (Carolee)



**ROBERT ZIINO**  
Eclipse Unmasked  
Experimental Artists

Getting a firm foothold during this release is completely impossible so don't bother. This is Metal Machine Music reborn. This album appears at first glance to be a completely chaotic collection of random circuit bending experiments gone horribly right. At a second glance, it's a beautiful collection of contra-melodies fading in and out against a stellar background of very creative experimental noise. I haven't heard anything that sounds quite like it, which makes it all the more appealing. Don't forget to bring extra quarters when listening to this nightmare-turned-video-game-soundtrack collection of songs. You'll need them. (Poseidon)