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As many of you know, Flipper are one of the most influential bands of the past 30 years, garnering praise and credit from Nirvana (whose bassist, Krist Novoselic, plays on this album), the Melvins, and virtually every band playing within the doom, stoner and sludge metal genres. And yet, despite this enormous influence, the band itself has existed in a state of relative obscurity throughout the past 30+ years. This, along with a tumultuous history of band member deaths (the most damaging being the death of bassist and co-vocalist Will Shatter in 1987), leaves one in sheer amazement that the band has even survived at all -- let alone release new recordings.

Flipper's last official studio album was 1993's Rick Rubin-produced *American Grafishy* -- an unfortunately little-heard, but admittedly strong entry into Flipper's discography (although nowhere near approaching the greatness of their previous albums, *Generic* and *Gone Fishin'*). Now, after what seems like (for me, at least) years of anticipation, the band has returned with a new studio album entitled *Love*.

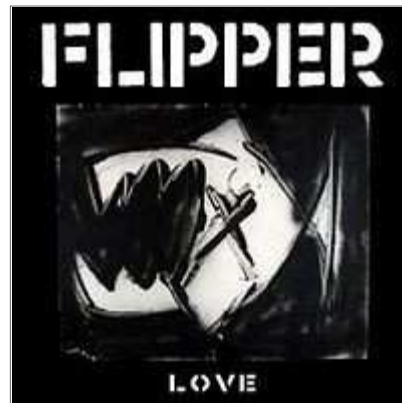
Over the past four years or so I have had the pleasure of being able to watch Flipper play in all of their live glory multiple times and, after viewing classic Flipper videos from the early 1980s, I can honestly say that the band is currently at their tightest and visceral career best (a rarity for bands of their age). This energy, combined with the classic "Flipper" sound that these guys could play in their sleep, shines through on this wonderful record. The band explores both the more speedy delivery of old songs like "Get Away" on new tracks like "Night Falls" and "Learn to Live," and also the sludgy dirge of "Sacrifice" on tracks like "Only One Answer" and "Why Can't You See." They also revisit territory similar to "Life Is Cheap" on the fantastic closer "Old Graves."

From what I'm saying, it sounds like this album is one big trip down memory lane, but it isn't, due mainly to the fact that there really is no one else out there (now or before) that sounds quite like Flipper. Also, it's thanks to the amazing Bruce Loose, who is much more aggressive and fiery with his vocals this time around. Krist Novoselic's bass playing also adds a wonderful dimension to the record and, quite honestly, sounds the closest to Will Shatter I have ever heard from the band. When you hear the bass opening to "Night Falls" you will instantly feel like you're hearing the same bassist who blasted through the opening of "In Life My Friends" from *Gone Fishin'*. Finally, there is Jack Endino (the famous producer behind Nirvana's *Bleach*), whose production is, quite frankly, perfect for a Flipper album. The bass pops just the way it should, the guitars sound distorted as all hell, Steve's drums sound strong, and Bruce's vocals tear through it all with beautiful anguish.

If you need to get one Flipper album, get *Generic* -- but this new album is a close second, tied with *Gone Fishin'*. A welcome and surprising comeback from one of punk rock's most groundbreaking bands.

Flipper

Love
2009
FLIPPER



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