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LOUNGE HOURS

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M.I.A. - *Kala*
(XL/Interscope)



Freaky London-based M.I.A. is one with sounds. Nonsensical, existential, ethereal, rhythmic, and somehow melodic, this mess of consciousness/political noise picks up right

where her major debut, *Arular* left off. Part party/bong album, part social commentary, M.I.A.'s tropical hip-hop reveals this young woman continuing to distinguish herself as a genre of one; there simply isn't anything out there that comes close to the beauty, strangeness and complexity that you find here. Her live shows must be an absolute blast.

— Dylan Gibbs

Echo & The Bunnymen - *Dancing Horses*
DVD
(Secret Films c/o MVD Visual)



Ian McCulloch and Will Sergeant's band was an 80's alt.rock cornerstone, melding moody post-punk guitar rock with darkly romantic poetry (but don't dare call them goth). Eventually, like most groups of the era, they fractured and ended up a sort of embarrassing parody of themselves. This 2005 live performance captures the band in their reformed, reinvigorated state, and it's

cd reviews

not necessarily just another nostalgic cash-in. Sure, the Bunnymen parade out new-wave classics like "Dancing Horses," "Killing Moon," "The Cutter" and "Lips Like Sugar," but the set here focuses more on their recent material, which holds up favorably to their beloved and influential catalog. The show itself is well shot, with multiple cameras and a 5.1 surround mix. The music sounds good and surprisingly modern. However, I do have one issue. Basically, McCulloch and company isn't all that energetic or interesting to watch. Mac's stoic, stationary stance leaves me cold, and, truth be told, quite bored. A bonus 47-minute interview with the band is insightful, too, but McCulloch appears cocky and self-reverential when discussing the history of his band. Bleah. I say longtime fans should pick this up, whereas casual observers look for a Bunnymen "Best Of" CD and stick with that.

— Todd Zachritz

Various - *High School Musical 2: The Soundtrack*
(Disney)



We include here this album not for any merit it may hold for anyone over the age of 13, but as something of a warning to parents of children held firmly in the grip of the

surprise hit franchise that leapt seemingly out of nowhere nearly two years ago. Why? Because you're gonna hear a lot of these eleven tracks, whether you want to or not. So you might as well become acquainted with them. Of course the album starts off with a big-bang number geared to get pre-pubes all a-twitter - the baseball-themed "I Don't Dance." From there, the kids from *HSM* dole out equal parts sappy/syrupy ballads, big-band dance numbers and enough cheese to keep all the mice in Albuquerque fed for a year (that's where the first film was set, or so says my eight-year-old niece).

Serious music fans wouldn't give this even a brief thought. But there's no denying the buying power kids have, so again, just a heads up to all you parents out there - you're going to hear this. A lot. Might as well play along and learn the words to the songs. At least that way you can have some fun embarrassing your kiddos, especially if you burst into song in say - the mall...

— Dylan Gibbs

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