

deep-voiced drama. The only real exception to this template comes at the end of *Black & White* with the gauzy ambience of "Dolphins," a song that makes the rote formula of everything that precedes it seem all the more tragic. www.simplereminds.com—**MS**
CCC½

SPACE MTN *A Drawing Of A Memory Of A Photograph Of You* (Night Light/Aeronaut)
With her cheerleader looks and outsider lyrics, Space MTN singer-bassist Dina Waxman is a walking contrast of glamour and gloom. Fortunately, her angst sounds as good as it looks. The debut record from her and fellow Los Angelinos Chris Jacks and Andrew Platts is all eerie introspection, with soft, synth-driven textures massaging against Waxman's plaintive tales of alienation. These ambient touches are augmented by judicious riffs from Jacks' axe — a necessary counterbalance, as Waxman's tendency to veer off into teenage diary territory with her lyrics might otherwise drown the record. All told, it's an emotionally cathartic song cycle that makes sadness seem rather sexy. www.spacemtn.com—**MS**
CCC½

TRICKY WOO



First Blush (Last Gang/Aquarius)
You've got to get up pretty early in the morning to out-rock the lads of Tricky Woo. Actually, you'd be better off just staying up all goddamned night — lord knows they will. Andrew Dickson's voice sounds like hard-livin', as if he marinates it in a mason jar of whiskey and cheap cigarettes between albums and his bandmates attack their instruments with the deranged, wild-eyed fervour of a pack of hungry wolves descending on a slow-moving deer. On the quartet's fifth album — and first for uber-hip indie label Last Gang — the Woo's tunes hit as hard as a buffet tray full of knuckle sandwiches, most notably on nice 'n' sleazy rawkers like "Pink Thunder," "Born In The City" and the title track, where truckloads of greasy riffs collide with a hip-shimmyin' rhythm section bottom-heavy enough to bend steel. The album's relentless pace and hot-shit guitar abuse starts to take its toll about six songs in, but if you can survive its unyielding rawk assault, *First Blush* is worth the bruises. www.trickywoo.org—**Steve English**
CCCC

VAILHALEN *Pop Violence* (Saved By Radio)

Calgary's Vailhalen overcome typical indie band quality limitations on their debut LP, crafting great sound and production despite recording the whole thing in a high school band room and the surrounding hallways. They even create an effective backing choir on one track by luring a girls' rugby team in from the field. *Pop Violence* opens with a swirl of drums and keys and never loses that momentum as it overflows with edgy organ/guitar pop, Chris Vail's insistent, slightly robotic vocals and a noisy drive. It's not dance-punk, but has the same energy, urgent beat and catchy-ass hooks. The first five tracks alone are worth the sticker price. www.vailhalen.com—**DMI**
CCCC½

YOU SAY PARTY! WE SAY DIE! *Hit The Floor* (Sound Document)

Like a left-coast version of Controller, You Say Party! We Say Die! paint a sonic picture of a disco overrun by hopped-up goths. On *Hit The Floor*, the Abbotsford, BC collective hit the ground running with "Cold Hands! Hot Bodies!" and the two-part "Stockholm Syndrome," which tumble into each other like a DJ mix. It's not all about butt-shaking, though — the album's sharp, blurted vocals and breakneck rhythms add a dose of punk personality. Though it's a bit lacking in lyrical depth, *Hit The Floor* is ragged, dark and danceable and doles out enough solid punches to justify the band's obsession with exclamation points. www.shzine/youysaypartywesaydie—**MS**
CCC½

Contributors: Mike Armitage (MA), Bryan Borzykowski (BB), Earl Cousins (EC), Steve English (SE), Caitlin Hotchkiss (CH), Shehzad Jiwani (SJ), Sarah Kurchak (SK), Noah Love (NL), Dan Lovranski (The Mouth), David McDougall (DMC), David Missio (DMI), Emma Sadowski (ES), Matt Semansky (MS), Michael Stittle (MST), Cheryl Thompson (CT), Shannon Whibbs (SW), Brian Wong (BW)

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Style Wars



STYLE WARS (Public Art Films)

Tony Silver's *Style Wars* offers an inside look into New York City's graffiti movement in the '80s when the transit system and artists went head to head. This two-disc doc presents the argument, "Is graffiti art?" and manages to show both sides of the dispute. By delving into the murky underbelly of the transit system, *Style Wars* presents a piece of history that has been washed away.—**ES**
CCCC½

DRIVE WELL, SLEEP CAREFULLY

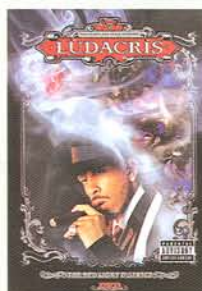


DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE *Drive Well, Sleep Carefully:*

On The Road With Death Cab For Cutie

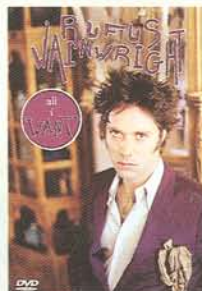
(Plexifilm/Sonic Unyon)

Without question Death Cab For Cutie are one of the hottest bands around. If their tranquil records aren't enough, then pick up this DVD. *Drive Well* follows the band on their 2004 spring tour, capturing several performances and intimate interviews and includes an acoustic set and demos as extras. While the music is great, a DVD about four nice, hardworking guys isn't that compelling.—**BB**
CCC



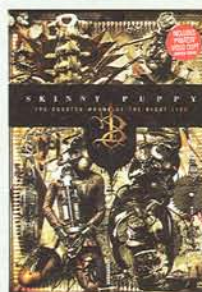
LUDACRIS *The Red Light District* (Universal)

Ludacris has always been content to rap about hedonism so it's appropriate he released an album and DVD about Amsterdam's Red Light District. The DVD features some concert footage, but mostly you see Ludacris get high, talk to prostitutes and lament his country's anti-drug laws. There are a few low-budget music videos shot on scene, but it looks like the crew was high too.—**MS**
CCC½



RUFUS WAINWRIGHT *All I Want* (Universal)

Documenting Wainwright's life from childhood up to the release of the *Want One/Want Two* albums, *All I Want* lets the music speak for itself. And accolades from musicians like Sting, Elton John and the Scissor Sisters don't hurt either. Seeing Rufus go from studio to stage to music video brings viewers inside his personal life, yet still leaves a sense of mystery. And, oh, those sideburns.—**DMI**
CCC



SKINNY PUPPY *The Greater Wrong Of The Right Live* (SPV USA)

The frenetic nature of Puppy's music, Ogre's penchant for covering himself in layers of goop and the band's imagery make for a solid, but not stellar DVD. The first half hour suffers from sub-standard camerawork. Tracks "Tin Omen" and "Inquisition" capture the band's intensity that hits a peak with "Human Disease," which splices in video imagery to great effect. The excellent sound makes up for somewhat uneven visuals.—**EC**
CCC½



THOR *An-Thor-Logy (1976-1985)* (Smog Veil)

If Rob Reiner had seen any Thor videos before making *This Is Spinal Tap*, he might have thrown in the towel, realizing that Thor had schlocked it up much better. But the difference: This guy is totally serious. *An-Thor-Logy* is the best nugget of hard rock, comic book buffoonery to ever come along. And while that may not sound like a ringing endorsement, it's still entertaining, which is after all the bottom line.—**The Mouth**
CCC