

cry." With such empty, hollow, music criticism floating about, it isn't hard to see why someone would make those (among other) statements: the album is just too generic in its genre. Essentially, it is all the build-up of Godspeed without the climax. While this album isn't bad, hell, most things on Temporary Residence are great; this is just another one of "those albums." Great for sunrises, Sunday brunches and cuddly morning sex. —Erik Lopez

Ektomorf

Outcast
Nuclear Blast
Street: 01.23
Ektomorf = Soulfly + Fear Factory



There's an obvious reason Ektomorf has found themselves outcast. They're one of those bands that spells the word "new" with that accent mark. You know the one. It goes over the letter u and makes a long "eww" sound. Eww. Ok, I'm not giving them quite enough credit. Although they adhere pretty strictly to the nü formula, they are a little more musically adventurous than most of their nü-metal counterparts. Apparently, they know how to play sitar, and that's some complicated shit. Still, I can't shake that feeling that I've heard this all before. The lyrics are angsty and juvenile. For example, in track eight, eloquently titled "Leave Me Alone," the singer screams over and over, "Why can't you see, why can't you see you're fucking up my life?" It seems like he's pretty pissed. Maybe mom wouldn't let him borrow the minivan to go to the mall today. —Chris Carter

Fear My Thoughts

Vulcanus
Century Media
Street: 01.23
Fear My Thoughts = Soilwork + Darkane + Caliban + The Haunted



The German melodic thrash outfit Fear My

Thoughts has something to offer for metal fans of many discriminating tastes. Amongst the blazing fast guitars, there are plenty of melodies to party down to as well. The band holds true to their German roots, inviting seminal German thrash troop **Destruction's** vocalist and bassist **Schmier** as well as guitarist **Mike Siffinger** to guest on the song "Accelerate or Die." Don't confuse that with these guys being straightforward thrash like Destruction; they add their own little flash of melodic stuff as well as plenty of top-notch, clean singing. There is enough diversity going on with this album to keep any cynical folks at bay and not get bored. It may not be winning any top awards for 2007, but Fear My Thoughts can duke it out with the best of many melodic thrash/death outfits. —Bryer Wharton

Ferocious Eagle

The Sea Anemone Inside Of Me Is Mighty
Polk Records
Street: 02.01
Ferocious Eagle = Deerhoof + Hella - The hoof and the hell

"Jam bam," "hammy-ham hands" and "jiggle-wiggle toss" effectively describe the sounds of Ferocious Eagle. The sea anemone inside of the rock trio is—like they say—mighty, although, it's also chockful of anxiety. Pummeling through the album with half-shouts about roundabouts (credit cards, Jesus, newspapers) and choppy, angular guitars, FE is like coffee on an empty stomach: a hot charge that nonetheless leaves you sweating in weird places and feeling irresolute. There's not much cohesion through the album nor in the songs themselves, but with song titles like "This Song Is A Train Wreck" and "I Just Don't Care," I have a feeling these guys are content with rocking like dinosaurs. —Senator Spencer

Field Music

Tones of Town
Memphis Industries
Street: 02.05
Field Music = Clinic + Belle & Sebastian

Field Music is one of the UK bands that continually linger in the "coming soon" area of the "next big thing" tent. They've garnered attention, attracted friends (Belle & Sebastian, **Maximo Park**, **The Futureheads**) and amassed critical acclaim. They write short, angular, rigid and brainy pop songs that somehow emanate warmth despite their mathematical disposition. *Tones of Town* is tighter than their self-titled debut, but in this case, maybe a bit too much so. I prefer the slightly reckless, unpolished Field Music (further emphasized on their B-side and rarities collection *Write Your Own History*), but a really good record is still really good even if it pales in comparison to its predecessor. —ryan michael painter

Fifty Caliber Kiss

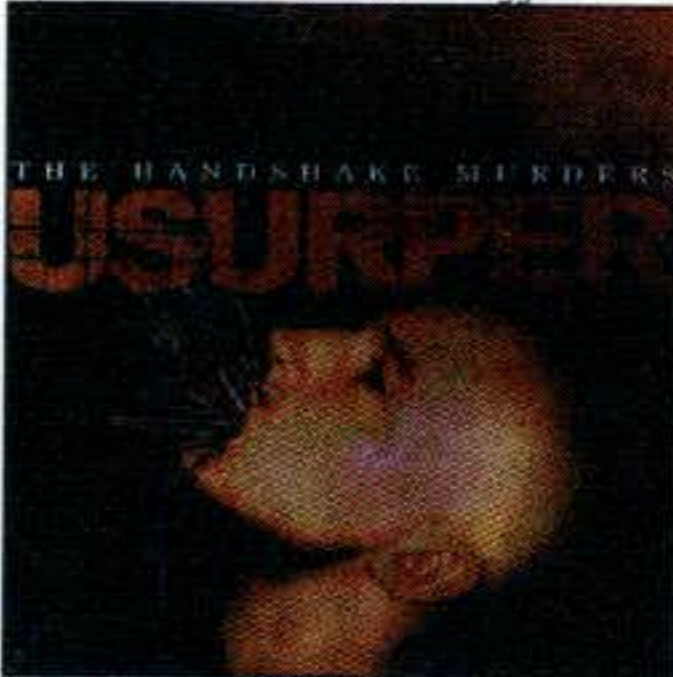
Armor Class Invincible
Universal Warning Records
Street: 02.20
Fifty Caliber Kiss = Chimaira + Norma Jean + Lamb of God

Fifty Caliber Kiss sounds like your basic hardcore metal band; however, what they lack in originality they make up for in

conviction. They seem to play their music with more passion and energy than any metal band that has come out recently. Yet, even with all their effort and intensity they, are just not pulling it off. The band in general seems to be pretending to be **Pantera**. The lead vocals throughout the whole album are a constant gut-wrenching scream that never lets up. The backing vocals sound like a mix between **Ozzy** and **Eddie Vedder**, but never seem to be quite on key. After listening to the first few tracks of the album, the constant screaming starts to wear itself thin and the guitar work, which alternates between traditional metal and hardcore, is tiring as well. The band has definitely mastered the art of playing hardcore metal, but there is no originality whatsoever. It would be nice to hear Fifty Caliber Kiss mix some other influences into their intense sound. —Jon Robertson

The Handshake Murders

Usurper
Goodfellow
Street: 02.20
The Handshake Murders = Coalesce + Blood Has Been Shed + Meshuggah



When I first spun this latest disc by The Handshake Murderers, I almost thought the Coalesce singer had joined up with a new band. Upon further research and listening, I realized that that was not so, but the band's vocalist embodies that same spirit and raw brutality. That said, it is the vocals that make this album stand out amongst the pack. On the song "Painted Contortionist," hearing the singer scream, "I'll rip your throat out" almost makes you shudder with fear in a corner. The intensity of the vocals alone allow listeners to finally sink their teeth into something that doesn't sound forced or contrived. As for the music, you have your stop-and-go mathematical riffing Meshuggah has so forcefully brought to the scene, along with some vicious breakdowns. Prepare yourself for a visceral ear-scraping and relish in this outing the usually trustworthy Goodfellow Records has to offer. —Bryer Wharton

The Harlem Shakes

Burning Birthdays
Self-release
Street: 02.06
Harlem Shakes = The Strokes + The Futureheads + The Hot IQ's

Before attempting the Harlem Shake, it is important to take the appropriate time and effort to stretch your muscles—remember, hold each stretch for 30 to 60

seconds, and stretching should not hurt. Done? Next step: place *Burning Birthdays* in the closest compact disc player; skip to "Sickos" (Track 4); now elbows in, palms down, feet together and shimmy. I find it easier to shimmy left and then back to your right, but whichever way you choose to shake, shake, shake yo' ass, the lo-fi sounds of NYC's The Harlem Shakes will aid in working any hip-swaying/arm-spinning out of your body. The Shakes' first EP, *Burning Birthdays*, is the decision of four underage garage-rockers to try and play it gritty but safe. Worked with plenty of down strokes and more whoa-ohs and OOOOOs than anyone should reasonably shake a stick at, *Burning Birthdays* comes off as a sunshine-polished version of The Strokes' 2001 *The Modern Age* EP, and as such, can and should be enjoyed with warm milk (4%) and cookies. —Miles Ridling

The Hatepinks

Tete Malade
TKO Records
Street: 01.09
The Hatepinks = The Briefs + The Stitches + France



For anyone who was planning on writing this album off because The Hatepinks are a French band—please fuck off and die now. These boys play dancy electro-punk fueled by catchy lyrics, pogoing and, of course, by wearing their shades inside—just like The Briefs. The resurgence of the 77-style pogo-punk hasn't gotten stale yet, and I think that this album may have been released at the peak of the wave. The chord progression on "Tete Malade" makes it sound like a Briefs song, while the vocals are more reminiscent of something from **The Adicts**. Fans of punk won't be the only ones who will enjoy this seven-track release. Anyone willing to take a chance in territory that may be a bit unfamiliar will leave pleasantly surprised. —Jeanette Moses

The Higher

On Fire
Epitaph Records
Street: 02.20
The Higher = Panic! At The Disco + Something Corporate + Justin Timberlake + Saves the Day + Maroon 5

My first reaction to hearing The Higher's *Epitaph* debut and sophomore album, *On Fire*, was that I wished it would have started on fire before I had a chance to hear it. Anyone who has even loosely followed punk in the last 10 years would know that at one time not too far past, *Epitaph* held the crown for promising punk bands, old and new alike. That