

Choice Cuts

Reviews of Everything

Album: *Love is Here*
Artist: Starsailor
Label: EMI

It's one thing for a country to have a distinct sound; it's quite another to find different ways of packaging the same music over and over again. With the debut of Starsailor, England's newest over-hyped band, that line has been crossed. Do I like Radiohead? Yes. Do I like Coldplay? Yes, I like Radiohead. Do I like Starsailor? Okay, fuck off. And did I mention Oasis? England, it is time to pick one of these bands and run with it. You have got a shitload of bands all writing the same stuff now.

Not that it is bad stuff, but the (to me) subtle differences between Starsailor and Radiohead or Coldplay are not enough to justify Starsailor's existence. They don't have the electronica going for them, which also means that, creatively, they are pretty banal; Starsailor sound a bit like Radiohead unplugged.

The lead singer, James Walsh, does not have Thom York's vocal abilities, and as for songwriting, he doesn't even come close: witness the title of this album, *Love is Here*. From the title track:

If you could see the lover in me
And we could join our hands together
If you could see how good it could be
We'll sing these stupid songs forever

It gets worse — the subject matter darting from alcoholism and alienation, to sunshiney ditties about how great it is to be alive:

As I turn to you and I say
Thank goodness for the good souls
That make life better

Walsh also tries for somber and heavy:

Don't you know you've got your
Daddy's eyes



And your Daddy was an alcoholic
But your mother kept it all inside
Threw it all away
I was looking for another chance
To see your blue eyed problem

So, what is this band about?! Bi-polar disorder?! Though their sound is almost identical to Radiohead's or Coldplay's, Starsailor lacks all of the formers' substance. Give *Love is Here* a pass.

P.S. There's a hidden track which you have to listen to fourteen minutes of silence to get to, and then it's just the band humming followed by girlish giggling.

-Joel MEGGS

Album: *Greatest Hits*
Artist: Ice Cube
Label: Priority/Virgin

There has been no shortage of

greatest hits albums released this year in rap (Outkast, Snoop, Busta, Ol' Dirty, Cappadonna, etc.) and Cube adds his to the pile. Like the first three on this lists, Ice Cube actually has enough albums to make a hits compilation. Ol' Dirty has released two good albums but it is a bit of a stretch to say he has enough hits for a whole album and Cappadonna's second CD sucked.

This disc features songs from all of Cube's solo albums since he left N.W.A. as well as "Bow Down" from his *Westside Connection* album, "We Be Clubbin'" from the Player's Club soundtrack, and "Jackin' For Beats" from the *Kill At Will* EP. There are also two new songs, "Hundred Dolla Bill Y'all" and "Late Night Hour" on this disc which may be annoying for devoted fans who have bought all Ice Cube's albums, but don't want to spend the cash for a couple of songs. There are two songs from his Bootleg

and B sides that might sweeten the pot, but is still unfair to his loyal fans who have supported him this long. However, these albums are perfect for people who like his music but don't have all his albums. The album was also missing the Ice Cube classics "No Vaseline", "Getto Bird" and "Ghetto Vet".

-Marc MACDONALD

Album: *Dawn*
Artist: Dawn Robinson
Label: Capitol

I didn't think I was going to be able to get through *Dawn* at first. Instead of lyrics in the liner notes, it has numerous pictures of the ultra-sexy, scantily clad Dawn Robinson. That never bodes well. Then the album starts with some guy muttering, "What are you into? I want to get into you," and Dawn responding, "Something about your sexiness makes this girl want to get undressed."

First impressions aside, *Dawn* is as solid an R&B album as I have heard in years. Twelve tracks with no throwaways. The rhythms are the kind that stick with you long after the album is over, and Robinson's singing makes her worthy of the designation "Diva."

Perhaps best of all is the complete unpretentiousness of her songs. There are no overly-melodramatic self-references to what she has been through with EnVogue and Lucy Pearl; no statements to the effect that "she's back!" Rather, each song on this album proves her worth as a solo artist (though at least three of the songs double up on vocals to the point where you'll swear you're listening to EnVogue).

If there is any shortcoming here, it is that there are no real straight-ahead dance numbers, not even the track "Party Party." But that's okay; Dawn's getting on in age, so it only stands to reason that she can no