

# Choice Cuts

## Reviews of Everything

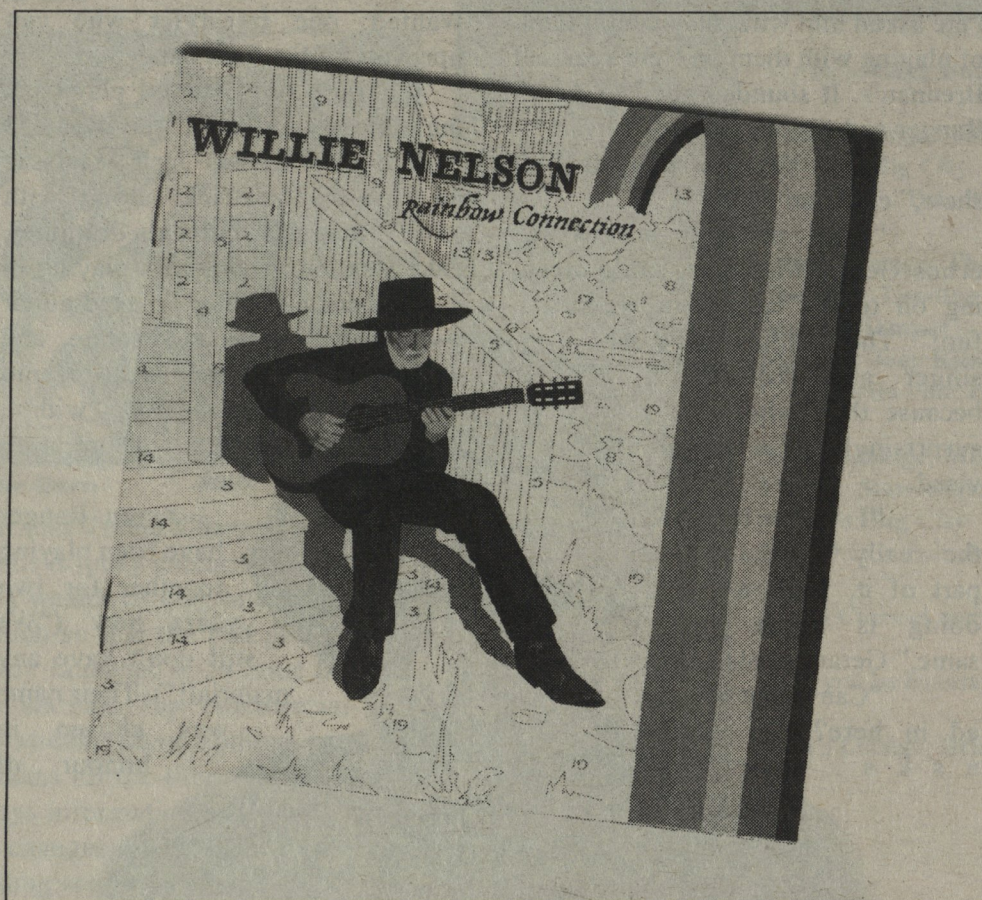
Album: *Rainbow Connection*  
Artist: Willie Nelson  
Label: Island

How can you go wrong with a children's album by Willie Nelson? It even has a paint by numbers cover for kids to colour. Willie's daughter Amy joins him on vocals for a few songs, and even gets a song writing credit for "Wise Old Me." This family album is full of sweet moments like Willie covering the Kermit the Frog classic, "Rainbow Connection," or "Ol' Blue" a song his grandmother used to sing to him when he was four years old (I can just picture a young Willie Nelson with braids sitting next to his Grandma while she plays piano). His father-daughter duet on "Playmate" is a fun rendition that will put a smile on your face no matter how old you are. And "I'm My Own Grandpa" is a twisted genetic tale about a family tree where the protagonist traces his grandparentage to himself. The album kind of loses consistency when Willie starts playing typical country fare like "Playin' Dominoes and Shooting Dice," the bluesy "Outskirts Of Town" or an unnecessary cover of "Just Dropped In (To See What Condition My Condition Was In)."

-Stephan MACLEOD

Album: *Control Change*  
Artist: A/V  
Label: Swordfight Records

This is A/V's second album, although since their debut, *There Is A God in A/V Heaven*, the band's membership has been halved, reducing it to yet another solo project by Halifax's Phil Clarke. A/V is a hybrid of 80s new wave and mid-90s electronica which simultaneously draws from both jungle and house, and produces an end result which is both catchy and aggressive. This CD definitely has its ups and downs, in my opinion. Since the secession of Selwyn, A/V's origi-



nal other half (who now supplies vocals and keyboard for Halifax's The Break Up), there has been a shift away from the playful new wave cheesiness toward heavier and darker (or perhaps, more appropriately, seamier) beats and lyrical content. There are a number of really outstanding, immensely danceable, driving tracks on this CD, but they are interspersed among just as many slower, somewhat drawn-out songs which really don't do much for me, and ultimately begin to try my patience. In the final analysis, if this album was about half as long, and had fewer slow to medium-paced songs, it would be phenomenal, but as it stands, it ends up being a little too much for me to take in all at once. By the time the album's over, I feel a little worn out and kind of dirty (you'll understand when you hear the lyrics—lyrics such as "her nipples calloused from the company she keeps . . . I know what it's like to be alone"). Yo.

-Jonah CAMPBELL

Album: *Ten New Songs*  
Artist: Leonard Cohen  
Label: Sony

It's been nearly ten years since Leonard Cohen's last effort, *The Future*. The last I'd heard of him, he had entered a Buddhist monastery in California, but now he's back with *Ten New Songs*. As uninspiring as the album title is, it also manages to be somewhat deceptive. Musically, there is nothing new about the ten tracks on this album. It is the same slow, haunting, keyboard-laden music that dominated Cohen's last album. I guess when your vocal abilities are that limited, the music must be fairly limited too. The lyrics, however, are as profound and mystifying as any of Cohen's. Depressing, though.

May everyone live,  
And may everyone die.  
Hello, my love,  
And, my love, Goodbye.

And here is the night,  
The night has begun;  
And here is your death  
In the heart of your son.

This from the track "Here it is." And there are plenty more tracks that will have you reaching for your cyanide pills. It's funny how musically Cohen is as easy-listening as they come, but lyrically he's not at all easy-listening. In this age of fluffy pop lyrics any degree of morbidity is both forgivable and refreshing. Cohen is a true poet; let's hope it isn't another decade before we hear more from him again.

-Joel MEGGS

Album: *Bread and Circuits*  
Artist: Bread and Circuits  
Label: Ebullition Records

I picked this CD up when we [Tastes Like Burning] were on tour, having no idea what to expect. I had read a lot about Bread and Circuits being a good band and that perhaps Steve Aoki had something to do with them (which he does not, incidentally). I also thought I remembered their name coming up fairly often in the race issue of *Heartattack* (a fairly prominent zine centred around 'leftist' politics and hardcore/punk music). At first listen, I must admit, I was a little disappointed, as I had been expecting something a little more, I don't know, dynamic? Experimental? Screamy? Whatever it was, this CD didn't fulfill it immediately. As I look back on that day now, I can only thank my lucky stars that I didn't write off or discard this album then and there, because since that first listen, Bread and Circuits has risen through the ranks of my collection to become one of my favourite bands, not to mention one of the most inspirational and challenging. Musically, Bread and Circuits play what I guess I'd describe as early 90s hardcore with a healthy punk rock