

Choice Cuts

Reviews of Everything

Album: *Songs in Red and Grey*

Artist: Suzanne Vega

Label: A&M Records

Suzanne Vega is your classic songstress. Though her voice lacks the same power that Sarah MacLaughlin or Celine Dion's hold, it is still sweet, soft and gentle.

The real flavour on this CD is in the instrumentals, with beautiful guitar riffs and a whole lot of mandolin in the background. This CD is total soft rock, and is meant for those whose tastes include Amy Sky, Natalie Imbruglia and Holly Cole. It's full of haunting rhythms, great instrumentals and deep, metaphor-laden lyrics.

Vega may have striven to write songs in red and grey, but this CD is all pink and mauve with a dash of blue.

-Mariève MACGREGOR

Book: *Speaking with the Angel*

Editor: Nick Hornby

Publisher: Riverhead Books

Speaking with the Angel is an excellent anthology of short stories edited by Nick Hornby (High Fidelity, Fever Pitch). The stories within are all first person narratives - the only conceit, other than consistently good writing (Irvine Welsh's tedious and foul-mouthed moral play "Catholic Guilt" aside) which holds the book together.

There are connections, however; in Roddy Doyle's "The Slave," a father's discovery of a dead rat in his kitchen awakens him to the feeling of being trapped within middle age and a mundane existence. Trapped too are the narrators of John O'Farrell's "Walking Into The Wind" and Nick Horby's "Nipplejesus," a delusional and unsuccessful professional mime, and a security guard hired to guard a collage portrait of Jesus made of magazine photos of women's nipples, respectively.

The warmth of humour in these

stories is another common thread that links these stories; that is certainly the case with Dave Eggers's "After I Was Thrown Into The River And Before I Drowned." The story is melancholy, though told with amazing exuberance and directness, all from the point of a view of a dog. It works almost perfectly, as does the rest of the book.

-Matthew DORRELL

Zine: *Zeitgeist the Canary #5*

Author: Liane Morrissette

This zine is brilliant, adorable, and hilarious. I have no idea who Liane Morrissette is (short of that she lives somewhere in Halifax), but she is a genius and I love her. *Zeitgeist the Canary* is an independent comic strip about a canary (and a handful of other household pets) doing little more than being damn funny. The artwork is crisp and simple, and the comic strip consists for the most part of the same panels reproduced over and over again with different word bubbles and minor alterations. While normally one might expect such an approach to leave the comic strip feeling stagnant, perhaps implying the artist's laziness, but here it works beautifully. Remember back when Garfield was funny? Well, this isn't much like that, cos you know, if you really think about it, Garfield was never that funny, but this shit, my friend, is funny.

(For copies, send three bucks to *Zeitgeist the Canary* c/o Liane Morrissette, 2323 Agricola St. Halifax, NS. B3K 4B5. Canada)

-Jonah CAMPBELL

Artist: The Pocket Dwellers

Venue: The Barn

Date: Friday 28th 2001

The Pocket Dwellers rocked the barn on Friday night to a sparse

crowd. This did not discourage the Dwellers, who returned to the Island with their mix of funk, jazz and hip hop.

The Pocket Dwellers' ability to infuse an MC with a live band and DJ kept things hype. The only thing that they can be compared to musically is the Roots, but even that is a stretch because the Dwellers use more of a jazz sound and are a lot more upbeat.

By the end of the night, they even had soccer players up on the dance floor. A great show, but hopefully next

time they come to UPEI the attendance will equal the level of the performance.

-Marc MACDONALD

Album: *Strange Little Girls*

Artist: Tori Amos

Label: Warner Music, 2001

Tori Amos' album *Strange Little Girls* is her sixth since her 1991 debut, *Little Earthquakes*. Unlike her previous five albums, *Strange Little*



The Pocket Dwellers.