

Music Reviews

The Mommyheads
Self-Titled
(Geffen Records)

Here is the 5th record from this San-Francisco based quartet; which, incidently is their first release on a major label. Go out and buy the CD right now because that would be the right thing to do. This band is oh such a refreshing change from the usual radio friendly excrement that makes up the "top nine at nine". The music is actually good. The songs weren't written by Babyface for five fresh faced teenagers. There are no drum machines. The songs actually have more than four chords. And not once on the entire album do we hear the words: "Put your hands in the air, wave 'em like you just don't care". Now I suppose you want me to compare these guys to somebody else so you can get a feel for what they sound like. Well, does anybody ever listen to old Paul McCartney records? The Mommyheads deserve to be listened to. The songs are thoughtfully written and melodic, and really show off the vocal talent of the lead singer. It's unusual to hear a guy singing these days who isn't trying to sound like Eddie Vedder. So now that you know how good it is, go out and buy it and love it. Or send me email and I will make a copy of the CD for you even though that is illegal.

Rob MacIsaac

The Gandharvas
sold for a smile
(Watch/Universal)

You may remember The Gandharvas from their release a while back, "First Day of Spring". Well they are back on the scene with their first release from *sold for a smile*, "Downtime", a philosophic look at the mentality of people today. The Gandharvas have a sound that could be described as 80's pop with less synthesizer. Their music tends to be very perky and upbeat, particularly "Hammer In a Shell". Vocalist Paul Jago has a really unique voice; he tends to sound more like he is talking in time to the music instead of singing (no, he doesn't rap) "Watching the Girl" is a cool song and "Milk Ocean" is very mellow and evokes the image of walking slow motion through a dream. Perhaps the best of all, The Gandharvas are Canadian. *Sold for a smile* is an album worth hearing. So give them a listen, eh?

Emilie Adams

Sinéad O'Connor
Gospel Oak Ep
(Columbia)

As a long time devoted fan of Sinéad, I must love this album. And I do, even though it's not as perfect as her earlier work. A short collection of six tracks, the recording centres around typical Sinéad themes of love, loss and the continual fighting between the Irish and the English. Tracks such as "This is to Mother You" and "This is a Rebel Song" are simply beautiful, expressing her quiet determination and inner strength through a pretty, yet relentless vocal score. "I am Enough For Myself" certainly fits in with these songs as far as theme is concerned but seems rather misplaced on the album. "4 My Love" is a gorgeous step away from typical pop sounds. Sinéad's voice cuts through the defiant back beat with clarity and earnestness. The live recording of the traditional Irish folk song "He Moved Through the Fair" is a somewhat disappointing ending to the album. As is often the case with live recordings, her performance is not up to par with studio results. While her passion is evident, her voice unfortunately breaks under the strain too often to make it a pleasurable listen. Over all, the cd is definitely worth a listen and is a necessary addition to any Sinéad collection.

Kristen Patterson.

Various Artists
Trainspotting #2
(EMI)

Trainspotting (the movie) was a welcome shock to the system. The heroine filled expose on life in Glasgow, Scotland was a fantastic fantasy-like reality. Sex, drugs and Iggy Pop were embraced and choosing life was just something to think about; or express to the viewers of the film. What came out of that movie was a wonderful selection of music, from trip-hop, to pop, to lollipop rebel mop tops. It was hip, it was cool; so why not make another one? I'll tell you why, cuz, it may not be as strong as the first and it will simply be known as a novelty album. Well, there are part truths. The lies are these; there are good songs on this second soundtrack, most notably Sleeper's "Statuesque", Goldie's "Inner City Life" and David Bowie's "Golden Years". But for some reason the album just doesn't grab you the way the first one did. Now I am guilty of making comparisons, of course, because if this were the first it may be received better. But we all know that it is the makers of Trainspotting that are trying to cash in a little more on the movie, they know it, so I don't mind calling it a disappointment.



Various Artists
A Life Less Ordinary (original soundtrack)
(A&M Records)

The deliciousness of this album is almost overwhelming, in no small part due to the galaxy of stars that has graced this soundtrack to Cameron Diaz and Ewan MacGregor's *A Life Less Ordinary*. The daze that you glide into with alterno legend Lou Barlow's grassroots trip-hop band Folk Implosion and their track "Kingdom of Lies" is beautifully shattered by REM's (quartet at the time) new rendition of "Leave", originally from their latest release. Underworld and The Prodigy both add to the occasion by allowing the atmosphere of gloominess to take control; but yet again a conflict occurs when The Cardigans are produced. The naming of all the artists on this album is simply done to prove that this is indeed a quality album with great groups and greater music. Beck spares neither enemies nor allies with the opening track "Deadweight" and probably the best song on the album entitled "Love is here" is delivered by New York grunge funk divas Luscious Jackson; the four woman band produces a tough pill to swallow but coats it with easily digestible soulful melodies. A beautiful soundtrack. Now, the question is whether the movie will be so good.