Celebrate Good Times With

Alexander Keith's

Listen To This

Beta Band

(Virgin/Astralwerks) *Hot Shots II*

> top pick <



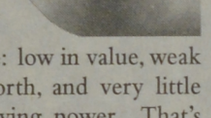
On the strength of their first three EPs, it looked like The Beta Band was going to single-handedly save music. But their debut album was a real mixed bag and it didn't live up to their obvious potential. Thankfully, *Hot Shots II* rectifies this, and maybe even surpasses those early days.

It's a mellow affair for the most part - the laidback vocals (which veer towards Gregorian chanting territory at times) really contribute to that feeling. Yet there are some pretty funky beats and samples underpinning most tracks, although they never get in the way of the tune. And that's a good thing because the tunes deserve to be heard again and again. At this rate, it looks like our fears were unfounded and The Beta Band might just turn out to be the musical force that they threatened to be all along.

**** • Michael Edwards

Dallah Bill

(BDR) *The Almighty Dallah Bill*



Canadian rapper Dallah Bill fits the description of the real Canadian dollar to a tee: low in value, weak in market worth, and very little consumer buying power. That's right, Dallah Bill's first album since being released from jail is very weak. The album, entitled *The Almighty Dallah Bill*, isn't mighty at all. In fact, it should have been put on the shelf just like the real Canadian dollar bill, which incidentally was replaced 16 years ago by a coin called the 'loonie.' Therefore, I draw the conclusion that this album would most appropriately have been titled *The Almighty Loonie*.

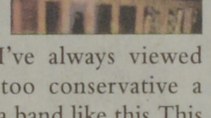
All joking aside, Dallah Bill really needs to work on his skills. The beats are average. Dallah Bill's rhyming flow is weak. His lyrics provide no conscious or intellectual depth. And for the first time in my life, I found myself turning the music level down when I pulled up next to someone in my mobile: I didn't want them to hear the weak music to which I was listening.

The only plus side of this album was the backup female vocalist. She had skills and was able to salvage the mess that Dallah Bill weaves. Aside from that, if you haven't figured it out already, the album was pretty weak.

0 stars • Troy Neilson

Dog Fashion Disco

(Spitfire) *Anarchists of Good Taste*



Dog Fashion Disco are a five-piece that hail from Washington D.C., a bit of a surprise considering I've always viewed Washington too conservative a city to breed a band like this. This is the band's second outing (the first being the oddly titled *Outerloop Records* on a label of the same name) and first on a major label.

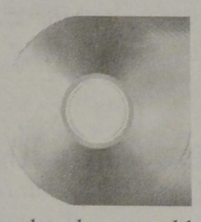
The band has, for certain, correctly titled their album, as the lyrics within need an adjustment of one's head space to begin to enjoy. Musically, things are all over the place and hybridization abounds. When it works, like on the industrial/doom of 'Pink Riots' and the stoner rock meets Marilyn Manson of 'Antiquity's Small Rewards,' it is very interesting and enjoyable, but when it doesn't work, like on the techno-metal ballad 'Vertigo Motel' and the heavily industrial 'Pour Some Urine On Me,' the results are sadly lacking.

Overall, not a horrid effort, as the band maintains enough musicality in the material to keep it from becoming too painful. It is apparent that the shock value of the strange lyrics is supposed to be the centrepiece here, much like earlier Alice Cooper efforts. Get it, but only if your lyrical tastes are properly bent.

** 1/2 • Jeff Budd

Baby Blue Soundcrew

(Universal) *Private Party Collector's Edition CD Vol. 2*



After the smash success of Baby Blue Soundcrew's *Private Party Vol. 1*, there was no surprise that there would be a Vol. 2. Canada's #1 mainstream hip hop crew built up tremendous support with their selection of dope tracks and the success of Vol. 1's hits 'Money Jane' and 'You've Changed.' Unfortunately, this sudden rise to fame brought with it very high expectations for *Private Party Vol. 2*.

There is no doubt that *Private Party Vol. 2* is a good party mix, but it doesn't come close to rivaling *Private Party Vol. 1*. The first single off the compilation, 'Love 'Em All,' just isn't on par with their previous singles. But, they manage to recover with infectious 'Salsa Lady' featuring Ro Ro Dolla & Solitair. Beyond that there are only five clear-cut dope tracks, Dr. Dre's 'Next Episode,' Ludacris' 'Southern Hospitality,' Ja Rule's 'Put It On Me,' Jagged Edge's 'Let's Get Married (Remarquable remix)' and Outkast's 'B.O.B.' Other hits that might tempt you (but not me) to buy the album include: Lil Kim's 'How Many Licks,' De La Soul's 'All Good,' Nelly's 'E.I,' and Eminem's 'The Way I Am.'

Overall, I felt that *Private Party Vol. 2* was only an average compilation. There just weren't enough truly dope tracks and it should also be mentioned that the album features only radio edits. It felt more like a 'left-overs' mixed cd than a collectors editions mixed cd. But the album does house several of the year's bigger hits and if you're looking for a party cd of hip hop, then this might do the trick.

** 1/2 • Troy Neilson

The Crystal Method

(Universal) *Tweekend*



The Crystal Method has put together a dynamic album of intense beats and funky vocals. With guest appearances by Scott Weiland (Stone Temple Pilots), Tom Morello (Rage Against the Machine), and DJ Swamp (Beck), *Tweekend* could make anyone want to get up and dance. It's the kind of album which would've driven your parents crazy. Each track is different and amazing, always in the midst of transition.

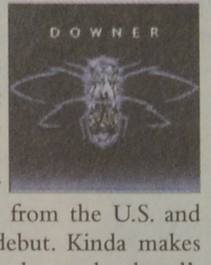
The song 'Murder' has solid rhythms, a spacey background and smooth eerie vocals. 'Name of the Game' (with Tom Morello and DJ Swamp) is heavier and in constant evolution; the song starts out with just a few bass beats and keeps on adding until it breaks into a calm fluid "eye of the storm" and then begins to build again. This album strays a bit from their previous effort, *Vegas*, as the Crystal Method explores denser beats which verge on industrial at times. *Vegas* was also great for its song diversity but it seems as though with this album, the Crystal Method has a more focused style which is anything but repetitious.

If you're a fan of techno I would strongly recommend *Tweekend*.

• Emma Hutchman

Downer

(Roadrunner) *Downer*



Unfortunately, as of this writing, there was not a lot of available info on this band, other than they are from the U.S. and this is their debut. Kinda makes you wonder about the band's relationship with the label.

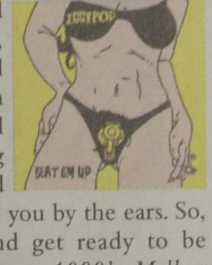
Musically, this album wanders the road between heavy punk and nu-metal, and lots of points in-between. This is really a case of the good, the bad and the ugly. The good is represented by the melodic 'Last Time,' the environmental 'Born Again' and the raging 'Ventilation.' For the bad, please see the out-of-place ballad 'Savior,' and similarly mediocre 'Speed Teeth' and 'Curbed.' The ugly is represented by the thirty minutes of dead air to get to a bunch of crap that passes for a hidden track, all twenty seconds of it.

Overall, this is a pretty solid effort by what could be a rising star of the hard music future. Clearly, Roadrunner is hoping to find the next Slipknot for their label, but fortunately they are not resorting to copy bands to do so. Get it, especially if you're into the current nu-metal vibe.

*** 1/2 • Jeff Budd

Iggy Pop

(Virgin) *Beat Em Up*



Ladies and Gentlemen, the musical extravaganza that you've all been waiting for is wet and ready to grab you by the ears. So, buckle in and get ready to be ridden because *1999's Mellow Avenue B* this is not.

Absent are any meditations on lost love or aging, and if the thought of distorted electric guitars in the hands of sado-mashochists bothers you then you'd best stay on the porch.

Iggy Pop's 14th solo ride is rife with enough howling punk metal to drive you straight to the confessional. Pop is back like a bad case of herpes, and some of these tunes will itch in your ears long through night. You can thank former Body Count bassist Lloyd "Mooseman" Roberts for the throbbing lower end that drives the album like a bored-out 450 four-barrel on a jacked-up '72 Chevelle. "Mooseman" got capped in a drive-by soon afterwards, so all you Ice-T fans had best be getting down to the music store before the Iggy Pop lovers beat you to it. You won't regret buying this: there's some long-lasting goodies for you to sink your teeth into here, and when he's not screeching, Pop's laying out languid lyrics dripping with juicy sarcasm.

'Mask,' the premiere track, opens with: "You're wearing a mask / You look better that way," before going on to berate Los Angeles denizens for "licking ass or having it licked."

Pop bookmarks the album with the satiric closing sentiments of 'VIP,' which humorously details the artificiality of being a star. Not to be forgotten is the powerful delivery of 'It's All Shit,' but let's just say the lyrics are everything the title promises.

As for the title track, it'll leave you bow-legged and sore, and wanting some more. 'Howl' is a loud romp through the land of hard noise and will tickle you to your curlies, while 'Drink New Blood' made me go bite the head off a chicken, and restored my flagging faith in the old fart. Its grinding bass sticks in your ear like a gigantic pepper mill and has enough hard-core guitar to make you drag your nails down a blackboard. Does Iggy scream? Oh, yes. Iggy screams. And although I might be on crack, I recollect a vibrato or two, albeit momentarily, and not necessarily on purpose.

Iggy Pop is a geezer, but doubt me not, this embodiment of human beauty refuses to get into the rocker; he's cranked up on Geritol and is working fine and regular-like.

• Chris Weagle

Big Sugar

(BMG) *Brothers and Sisters, Are You Ready?*



If you're sick of half-assed modern rock and you can accept an album pumped full of reggae rock and blues, then brothers and sisters, you are ready.

If guitars could smoke then they'd probably end up coughing like Gordie Johnson's. But it sounds great; in fact, it seems as if his vocals and guitars scratch the same rough surface on the wall of sound. Sounds great, but it's just that I was expecting a little more from what the guitarist half of Johnson had to offer. Besides the awesome version of 'O Canada,' the album doesn't really put much emphasis on lead guitar riffs beyond what I consider to be the rhythm alone.

In an age of the prevalent slow song, Big Sugar has written and produced an album of completely up-tempo tunes that are thankfully oblivious to great depth and depression. None of the songs on this album fall too far from the sound of one of their previous singles 'Turn the lights on.'

Side effects of buying this CD...

1. An uncontrollable urge to shake your shaded area.
2. A sudden craving for old-fashioned oversized candies.
3. A tendency to listen to tracks #1, #3, #4, #5, #11, #12, and #13 more than the rest.
4. An acquired taste for Big Sugar.

*** 1/2 • Gavin Simms

Doyle Bramhall & Smokestack

(BMG/RCA) *Welcome*



Everybody knows who Roger Waters and Eric Clapton are, right? Well, if you don't, you should, and if you do, you'll find the dedication to these two music legends in the liner notes of this CD intriguing.

Doyle Bramhall played recently on Clapton's *Reptile* disc, and did some great work on several of the tracks. *Welcome*, however, is his first major effort as a solo artist. Bramhall is backed up by the band Smokestack (which includes his wife as a backup singer and percussionist), but this is clearly a vehicle for his guitar work. Lyrically this isn't a great album and Bramhall's voice isn't as skilled as some male singers in the genre. At the same time, this CD isn't supposed to be a showcase for Bramhall's voice or choice of words; it is an exposition of his outstanding guitar work. The tones he gets from his instrument are reminiscent of many guitar heroes of the past: Clapton, Hendrix, and Stevie Ray Vaughan, to name a few. 'Greenlight Girl' is a radio friendly hit that rocks. 'Smokestack' is another standout tune.

This CD is definitely worth a listen for those who still believe in guitar heroes, and if you don't, that's fine because the bluesy rock on this effort will probably put a smile on your face and a song in your head anyway. Hey, Clapton and Waters can't be wrong, can they?

• Kirby Arbeau

Big Dumb Face

(Flip / Geffen) *Duke Lion Fights The Terror!*



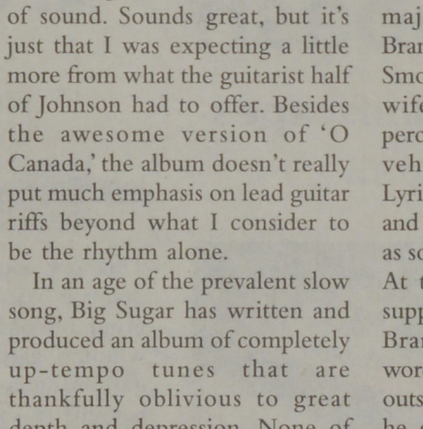
Big Dumb Face is a concoction of melodies crafted by the demented guitarist of Limp Bizkit, Wes Borland. Fans of Limp Bizkit are in for a surprise if they are looking for a carbon copy of the band's style of music. Borland is at the helm of all the instruments and even most of the vocals on his debut album, *Duke Lion Fights The Terror!*

With a blend of guitar hooks, pounding drums and digitally altered voices, Borland pens a comic book storyline as he fights the demons in his head. He samples different genres of music (even Saturday morning cartoon style theme songs) to create total musical chaos.

The music on the album, for the most part, is very catchy. Lyrics, on the other hand, sound like something an adolescent would write about. Songs like 'Mighty Penis Laser' (pronounced pen-us) and 'Organ Splitter' makes references to bleeding, guts, intestines and masturbation. The song "Rebel" is basically an ode to all the Joe Dirt's in the world. "So you say / That you're a rebel / You pump that bass / Turn down the treble / If it turns you on / Come down tonight / I guarantee – We'll have a fight," is an anthem to anyone who lives in a small town that drives a pickup truck and sports a mullet.

All in all this album is definitely worth a listen if you have a sense of humor or if you can stomach gross, disgusting things. A small bonus to Canadians is a sample from Bob and Doug McKenzie's movie *Strange Brew* in the song 'Organ Splitter.' I do have to mention though, that if it weren't for Limp Bizkit, Wes Borland's side project would be lost in a record store discount bin waiting for someone to discover it.

**1/2 Korry Hill



WIN NOW 6!

daft punk, u2, moffats, nelly furtado, creed, barenaked ladies, lenny kravitz, coldplay, bran van 3000, uncle kracker

Just email the answer to the following question to bruns@unb.ca:

Q: Name 3 bands on Now 6

It's that frickin' easy!

. the listings .

Music

Fri 12th
Clear Sailing, Dolan's
Jomommo, Toronto trip funk, Cellar
Slyde, Chestnut

Sat 13th
Clear Sailing, Dolan's
Flying Boat, funk, Capital
Slowcoaster, Cellar
Michael White, Led Zeppelin Tribute, Chestnut

Sun 14th
Flying Boat, Capital

Mon 15th
Jazz Night, Capital

Tues 16th
Chris Nettleton, Capital

Wed 17th
Jam Night, Cellar
Rascals, Kardinal Offishall, K/OS, Upperdeck

Thurs 18th
Blue Quarter, New Deal-ish, Cellar
FVT, Dolan's

Fri 19th
FVT, Dolan's
Jimmy Swift Band, Iron Giant, Sea of Green, Cellar

Art

Brown Bag It! Film Series presents Hogarth's Marriage à la Mode. Thurs. Oct 18th, 12:30 pm, Beaverbrook Art Gallery. Free. Bring a lunch, coffee will be served.
Gerald Baeulieu: *X-ray Specs*. UNB Art Centre, until Oct 21st.
Garry Neill Kennedy: *Work of Four Decades*. Beaverbrook Art Gallery, until Jan 16th.

Readings

Sue Sinclair and Ken Howe, Memorial Hall, Oct 15, 8pm.

Locations

Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 703 Queen
Bugaboo Creek. 422 Queen.
Cellar, SUB, UNB
Chestnut, 440 York St.
Dolan's, 349 KingPipers Lane.
Hilltop, 1034 Prospect.
The Capital, 362 Queen.
UNB Art Centre, Memorial Hall, UNB.
Upper Deck, 375 King.

Please email (bruns@unb.ca) or fax (453-5073) info to The Bruns (Attn: Rachel) by Tuesday at 5:00pm for inclusion in the listings.

The Favourite Beer of UNB & STU



Those who like it, like it a lot.