Celebrate Good Times With

Alexander Keith's

Rollins Band

(Sanctuary/EMI) *Nice*



Only a year after his last album, *Get Some, Go Again*, Henry and crew grace your local record store with a new offering of metallic rock. No longer on the Dreamworks super-label, the band is now on the strongly emerging metal arm of EMI, Sanctuary.

One of the main strengths of this album, like its predecessor, is its diversity. There are several genres of metal here, along with a touch of punk for the older fans. The best tracks would be the nearly progressive 'One Shot,' the funky 'Up For It,' and the doom-like 'Hello,' while the weakest links are the songs that stray a little too far, like the jazzy 'I Want So Much More' and the stoner rock of 'Hangin' Around.'

Overall, this is quite decent, and should Rollins manage to get some radio play he may have a sizable hit on his hands. As usual, older fans will be disappointed, while newer fans will be delighted.

*** 1/2 • Jeff Budd

Radiohead

(Capitol/EMI) *I Might Be Wrong – Live Recordings*

As most people have already noticed, something new has been brewing in the Radiohead camp these last two years. The change was first marked by the release of *Kid A* and then made concrete by its sister album, *Amnesiac*. Neither of those sounded like the sci-fi grunge-rock fans were accustomed to and to celebrate this turn in their career the band has released a collection of live recordings from their recent Amnesiac tour: *I Might Be Wrong*. Live albums are almost always a shaky affair and this endeavor seems particularly daring considering the inorganic nature of *Kid* A and *Amnesiac*.

Luckily, Radiohead is an incredible live act and they tackle their more abstract material with intensity and vigor. Despite solid performances, however, most of these versions don't stray very far from their studio counterparts. The opening 'National Anthem,' for example, is forceful and energetic, but comes off sounding somewhat stiff anyway. For this reason, the more adventurous interpretations end up being the highlights of the album. 'Like Spinning Plates' has been reconstructed as a beautiful piano ballad as opposed to the machine-like pulsing of the original and the previously unreleased 'True Love Waits' ends the album on an even more delicate note.

**** • Patrick Reinartz

My Ruin

(Spitfire/EMI) Speak & Destroy



Although available last year, this debut album is still topical as it should be used as a primer for the new CD to be released later this year. My Ruin is the brainchild of its viciously beautiful front-woman Tairre B, who (if I remember my hard music correctly) was formerly connected to Tura Satana.

Musically, this one's all over the place. From the death metal-like 'Blasphemous Girl' to the punky 'Preacher,' to the heavy techno of 'Terror' and the nearly Sabbathian groove of 'Diavolina,' finds the band trying to perhaps please all fans of the hard music genre. Ironically, I find many similarities to Canada's own Kittie on this cd, especially 'Sickwithit' and 'Masochrist,' Nothing seems to really suck, but nothing really stands out either.

Overall things are different enough to keep one interested, especially if the lyrics aren't a turnoff. Tairre is going for the female Henry Rollins, or heavy Ani DiFranco kind of vibe, which is pulled off convincingly enough, now only if people want to hear the message. Get it, but only if you don't mind a little man-bashing with your music.

** 1/2 • Jeff Budd

The Divine Comedy

(EMI) *Regeneration*

Neil Hannon, lead singer and driving creative force behind The Divine Comedy, is in the wrong industry. The guy can pen some great lyrics, but his music is boring. Somebody give this man a book deal so no one has to endure another glockenspiel and keyboard laden Divine Comedy album.

Some truly great lines like, "weeks go by quicker than drunks knock back liquor" and "the cars in the churchyard are shiny and German, completely at odds with the theme of the sermon," become disposable simply because the music they're set to is not compelling. Add to this the fact that Hannon croons his lyrics in a sing-songy way that places far too much emphasis on their rhyme scheme, and you end up with a waste of time.

For the record, while the members of The Divine Comedy are British, I am not. Therefore, like all "we're huge in the UK" bands, I'm left with the impression that one has to be British (read: shallow and unattractive) to truly "get it."

** • Burt Muston

Perry Ferrell

(EMI) *Song Yet to be Sung*



Song Yet to be Sung is Perry Ferrell's first album with new material in over five years, not to mention the first time he has released anything under his own name. Originally lead vocalist for the Jane's Addiction & Porno for Pyros, Ferrell has undertaken a solo project and is no newcomer to the entertainment scene. The CD is a brave journey into a whole new style of music for Ferrell. It ventures into the realm of house and jungle beats, with lots of drum and bass, something that Perry has always been a fan of. With guest appearances from guitarist Dave Navarro and drummer Stephen Perkins, both of Jane's Addiction, *Song Yet to be Sung*, feels familiar yet extremely different. If the lyrical stylings of Perry Ferrell peak your interest and ears, then this CD should be long overdue.

*** • Dave Gagnon

Tyrese

(RCA/BMG) *2000 Watts*



After the smash success of his debut album, Tyrese is back with *2000 Watts*. The album, titled after the name of the ghetto in which he was raised, is a mix of feel-good tracks, like the infectious first single 'I Like Them Girls' and heartfelt struggles like those on 'I'm Sorry' and 'What Am I Gonna Do.' Tyrese's vocal range provides an original soulful R&B style, mixing raspy, smooth and silky vocals all into each track. He also mixes up the tempo with slower ballads and more upbeat pop-esque R&B. The hottest track by far was the Jermaine Dupri-produced, 'Off The Heezy.'

The album also doubles as an enhanced cd, housing the story of Tyrese's rags to riches life story. If you are able to get the video to play, it's well worth the effort as it portrays a whole new side of Tyrese.

Overall, I felt this album bordered a bit to close to a pop-R&B album. I truly hope that Tyrese doesn't categorized into the ranks with 98 Degrees, N'Sync and such, because he has so much more soul then those fake groups. But Tyrese's skills shine through, making this album impressive.

*** • Troy Neilson

Transmatic

(Virgin) *Transmatic*

Transmatic's self-titled debut album is as lackluster as their name. The Indianapolis quartet formed in 1999, and although they have some talent, they have not yet found their niche. Singer Joey Finger's voice varies from smooth and soothing to very strained when he is competing with the music. Their music is catchy and they exhibit enthusiasm for what they do, but it is nothing out of the ordinary. Maybe some helpful hints from other established musicians and more experience will bring them out of the "radio music" category. Until then, Transwho?

** 1/2 • Jill Delaney

Listen To This

Das Radio

(Indie) *Peter's Koala Adventure*

> top pick <



This collection of six synth-rock pieces has been riding the top of campus radio charts since its release in November, and from listening to it the reasons are obvious. A unique blend reminiscent of the Cure and Depeche Mode, each song goes through waves from calm to chaotic. At the beginning of each song, a mood is set: from the lone bass and single drum at the start of 'Alcoholic Lovesong,' or the spacey overdubbed voices in 'Going Thin.'

At its quiet points, the album sounds well-balanced, but in a few places the vocals dominate and the bass is barely audible, giving it a home-recorded sound. In any case, both the diversity of the songwriting and musicianship are stellar.

Having been officially together for less than a year, the band has already played many local shows, including opening for Eric's Trip in September. Das Radio is definitely one of Fredericton's most promising new bands. Keep your ear to the ground - this band is sure to strike again soon.

**** • Rachel Long

Way Out West

(Nettwerk) *Intensify*

Picking up the CD because of it's groovy cover, I never expected the pleasant trance explosion my ears received.

Turns out WOW is a duo of Vancouver based super-DJ Nick Warren and keyboardist Jody Wisternoff. Remixes and production assistance from Digweed ensure a powerful release. Most of the album is well suited for club use; heavy bass lines and superb sampling all at about 135 BPM. Interesting though, that such a dance-floor oriented duo should produce such strong club anthems on the side-by-side sheer formage. The gruelling, groove-stopping 'Intensify (Part Two)' is filled with vomit-inducing lyrics ("I can't bear your rejection, it makes me cold, down to my bones, even in my soul, I believe in you.") set to mediocre,happy downtempo; the kind of thing only Dave Leland could love. The good is great, the bad is terrible.

** • pbf

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