

NIN could reduce you to puddle state

by "Switch"

Nine Inch Nails
Pretty Hate Machine
TVT Records

In the top echelon of my ever-changing universe, bands do come and go, but I must admit my standards are pretty high. Few albums have become part of my daily routine without a significant history. Yet, Nine Inch Nails have driven themselves directly into my top 10.

I haven't been this excited about a new band since...well, I can't remember when. *Pretty Hate Machine*, which incorporates pop, new wave and industrial, is as far from sounding "mechanical" as could be.

"Nine Inch Nails is Trent Reznor," proclaims the lyric sheet. All tracks on the album, except one, were produced by Reznor, with the help of John Fryer, Adrian Sherwood and Keith Le Blanc.

Flood, who is infamous for his production work for Cabaret Voltaire, U2 and, most recently, Nitzer Ebb's new album, is credited for synthesizer programming, but isn't involved in the production. The most notable, though, are those who are sampled, borrowed from, or furnish inspiration. They include Clive Barker, Jane's Addiction, Prince, Public Enemy, This Mortal Coil, and Screaming Trees U.K.

"Down In It," the single that was released off the 10 track album, is most unusual. Nine Inch Nails/Trent Reznor is a rare breed, almost extinct in this commercial jungle that we call home. Finally, a band that releases its worst track as a 12 inch single!

"Down In It" fails to win my favour as more than an industrial rap tune. Too bad, since the lyrics (although still the lowest quality on the album) have the potential to drive a very powerful song. Maybe that's where the number Nine came from: nine very powerful compositions driven deep into the soul of the listener.

I can't really tell you whether I prefer the music or the lyrics. To me that's not the point of *Pretty Hate Machine*. Trent Reznor's music captures an essence, sometimes mildly soothing, sometimes angry, sometimes melancholy. There is a great power behind the

music and the words, or rather a grand passion.

Nine Inch Nails has to be the most erotic band to hit the commercial market since that chick who's wrapped up in grooves, crosses, virgins and lately, Jean-Paul Gaultier. The difference is that NIN is tastefully erotic, possessing the allure of black lace and cold leather. If track 4, "Sanctified," doesn't twinge a nerve or

send a tingle...well, anywhere, you either belong in the darker regions of Barker's *Books Of Blood* or you've never had an intense contact with another warm-blooded creature.

The keyboards on "Something I Can Never Have" do it for me before Reznor even begins to croon out lyrics so passionate and soulful that if the synth didn't have my brain tranquilized, I

would be reduced to puddle-state.

The slow songs are phenomenal, but the heavy beat dance tunes like "Head Like A Hole" and "Sin" whisk you into a maelstrom of sound, daring you to dance in its vortex at your own peril. The point that needs to be stressed is that NIN manages to successfully combine intelligent lyrics, a steady beat and passionate ener-

gy. Considering that almost all the music comes from machines, NIN manages to remain an ultra-original, artistically well-oriented band.

Pretty Hate Machine is on my top two list for summer listening, along with Bootsauce. If you don't own it, or haven't heard it, then life isn't worth living, so put yourself out of your misery and share Trent Reznor's.

AMAROK

Experimentation 17 years late

by Ira Nayman

Mike Oldfield
Amarok
Virgin Records

Amarok is the perfect follow-up to Mike Oldfield's debut album, *Tubular Bells*. The fact that 17 years and several undistinguished pop-oriented albums came between the two is a mere glitch of history.

Amarok is a 60 minute work (an anachronism in our predominantly three minute pop universe) that grafts electric guitars and other modern instruments onto classical musical structures. But, where *Tubular Bells* developed one musical theme at a time, the themes on *Amarok* are interwoven, disappearing at one point, only to return in a somewhat altered form.



Amarok is the more ambitious album.

Oldfield has certainly taken notice of the changes made in pop music in the last 17 years: *Amarok* contains sampled voices, African rhythms and even the dreaded synthesizer (although, the liner notes assure us, not much at all, really). At times, the disparate elements threaten to fly off in all directions, completely out of control; but, Oldfield's unique musical vision usually manages to keep things together.

There is the question of timing: the early 70s was a time of musical experimentation which could accommodate Oldfield's musical ramblings. The late 80s, being a time of corporate dominated rock, seems far less hospitable. In short, I doubt that there's much of an audience for this work.

This is unfortunate; I found *Amarok* intelligent (in a way New Age music never quite manages to be) and enjoyable to listen to (ditto). It is a challenging work; but, as with most challenging works, it can prove to be highly rewarding.

And, yes, Oldfield plays (almost) all the instruments.

The best of Raitt is a neat summary

by Howard Kaman

Bonnie Raitt
The Collection
Warner Bros.

Earlier this year, the American National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences made a rare move and awarded four Grammys to someone who deserved them: Bonnie Raitt. Since 1971, Raitt has been playing stunning music, progressing from, but never abandoning, her bluesy roots.

Following the sweep, awarded for her 1989 album *Nick Of Time*, we have *The Collection*, a neat summary of her 16 years with Warner Brothers. Through 20 tracks, ranging from the early original "Finest Lovin' Man," to her 1986 recording of Bryan Adams' "No Way To Treat A Lady," her ability to stamp any song with her style is well documented. Included are her first bona fide hit, a cover of Del Shannon's "Runaway" that far surpasses the original, and a previously unreleased duet with her mentor, blueswoman Sippie Wallace, on "Woman Be Wise."



There are also extensive liner notes, with Raitt commenting on each song, occasionally giving some insight as to why she recorded it. While Jim Maloney's introductory essay describing Raitt as "One of the premier R&B

and rock stylists of her generation" may be a bit much for some, it is hardly a reason not to pick up this set

The Collection is a fine introduction to a powerful and influential voice in music.

DADDY G'S TAKE OUT RESTAURANT WELCOME BACK!

WE SPECIALIZE IN WEST INDIAN & CANADIAN CUISINE

- roti (chicken or goat)
- jerk pork
- curry goat
- patty & coco bread
- jerk chicken
- rice & peas

COME ON OVER AND TRY US!

667-9690

1290 FINCH AVE. W. UNIT 13
(NORTH EAST CORNER OF KEELE & FINCH,
BESIDE NICEY'S FOOD MART)

HOURS: MON-WED 10am-9pm, THURS 10am-10pm,
FRI 10am-12 midnight, SAT 10am-11pm

YORK STUDENTS SPECIAL OFFER

Pay for Saturday and Sunday
and receive Monday to Friday FREE.

Pay only \$1.75 per week.

Subscribe for 26 weeks and pay \$45.20,
a savings of \$36.40.

The Toronto Star is now available in your residence.

Contact Robin at 635-6363 to subscribe now.

Monday-Friday 9 am — 5 pm

THE
TORONTO
STAR

Now that's a newspaper!