

Love is...
Various Artists
BMG

Stop, don't go any further. If you like love songs, *Love is* is for you.

OK OK OK! I know, the name alone is enough to turn anyone off this compilation CD, but hear me out first. There are 14 tracks on the disk, and there isn't one song that I don't already know all the words to. Although this release brings in music from several genres, it works. I actually like most of the artists concerned.

There are several classic cuts on this disk, ranging from "Kiss On My List," by Hall & Oates to "I Will Always Love You," by Dolly Parton.

I must point out, however, that this disk is in no way limited to "oldies but goodies." It also features songs by artists like Annie Lennox and Rick Astley, and by bands like Cowboy Junkies and Prairie Oyster.

All in all, this is a great CD if you're planning on a slow, sweaty evening for two, or a night sitting alone, eating ice cream and wondering why he "done you wrong."

JOSEF TRATNIK

Waiting To Exhale
Various Artists
Arista Records/BMG

Well, Babyface has done it again. After successfully producing megastars such as Whitney Houston, TLC, and Toni Braxton — and winning three Grammys, BMI and Billboard's number one Pop and R&B songwriter of 1994, and a Soul Train Music Award for album of the year — Kenny Edmonds gives us the soundtrack to the movie *Waiting to Exhale*. It's a landmark musical event featuring an unprecedented powerhouse line-up of pop and R&B's hottest divas: Whitney Houston, Mary J. Blige, TLC, Brandy, Chaka Khan, Patti LaBelle, Faith Evans, SWV, CeCe Winans, Shanna, For Real, Chanté Moore, and Sonja Marie.

What makes this soundtrack unique is the diversity of female artists that are on it. The first single, "Exhale (Shoop Shoop)," by Whitney Houston is a warm, uplifting ballad that summarizes the overall theme of the movie and its soundtrack. Toni Braxton's "Let It Flow" — with Babyface playing acoustic guitar — is one of the best songs on the album. Brandy does an amazing job with the upbeat

"Sitting Up In My Room" and Chanté Moore delivers "Wey U," a seductive Sadé-type groove.

The amazing contributions made by TLC, SWV, Mary J. Blige, and Faith Evans sing of romance and relationships from a female perspective, as do all the songs. There are even adult contemporary tunes on the album from Chaka Khan and Patti LaBelle.

Babyface is creating history with these fourteen new state of the art songs performed by an allstar cast. The Oscar committee will certainly have to create more categories for Best Song from a Film because five is not enough.

MOHANAD MORAH

Different Dreams
Masterboy
Polydor

I think I've got it. I know exactly what the problem is with Masterboy's *Different Dreams*.

The CD opens with a three minute intro called "Waterfalls" which is without a doubt the answer to any insomniac's prayers. It is utterly boring and just drains any energy the listener might have. All of a sudden you're thrust into heavy bass and super-



synthesized melodies. The problem with *Different Dreams* is that the members of Masterboy are having difficulties recovering from the sleep-inducing opening track.

The music itself is just... well...it's okay. Certainly it's not original, but with dance music that's hard to find. The music sounds much like Real McCoys, 2 Unlimited, or Culture Beat, only not as fresh and energetic.

The real problem here is the vocals. The mandatory female vocalist sounds tired and run-down. She does not emit a molecule of energy. The 'rappers' (and I use this term lightly) are pretty sad. Picture Bob Saget as a rap star and you get an idea of this German trio's abilities.

The second-to-last song, "Do You Wanna Dance," does show some potential. It's nearly catchy and I must confess I could almost see myself dancing to it. Unfortunately, one song does not a CD make. As if the first time through all of the songs wasn't mundane enough, there are three bonus tracks (ooh the excitement) which are remixes of some of the worst songs on the disc — only, from what I can tell, there is absolutely no remixing involved. Too bad they couldn't have mixed all of the vocals out and left the music, which is at least half decent.

In short, Masterboy's *Different Dreams* would be more aptly titled *Familiar Nightmare*.

JODY GURHOLT

Truckbirdydiggerdog
Chickpea
Rightwide Records/Original Records

Ottawa's Chickpea have just released a winning collection of power pop on Rightwide Records called *Truckbirdydiggerdog*. Too young to slow down (but old enough to be able to play their instruments), Chickpea has my vote for best happyrock band of the year.

There's a lovely balance of male and female vocals on this album, with Christine Chesser's whines sounding almost melodic. The tunes often sound familiar — is "Panic Twister" a cover of some undiscovered Radioblaster song? — but Chickpea transcends their obvious influences. Their lyrics are refreshingly tongue-in-cheek; witness Chesser's insistence that she is not the girl from Ipanema on their best song, "Obscure love song."

If you like music energetic enough to make foot-tapping an Olympic exercise and enthusiastic enough to bring a smile to the faces of most determined curmudgeons, *Truckbirdydiggerdog* is for you.

JOANNE MERRIAM

Burn
Sister Machine Gun
TVT Records/Wax Trax!

I have always considered industrial music to be dance music for the clinically insane. This is not a bad thing. In fact, I kinda like it. I don't know what this says of my

mental state, but I think it would be really cool to see a local bar have an industrial dance night. (Pssst...hey, Birdland...hint, hint)

Sister Machine Gun is comprised primarily of vocalist/keyboardist/programmer/producer Chris Randall and guitarist Chris Smits (aka Xmas). There is also an assortment of other artists filling in various instruments and noises.

Burn is the third release from SMG and, according to their bio, sounds nothing like the previous two. The overall sound of this album is that poppy/dancy sound epitomized by Nine Inch Nails' *Pretty Hate Machine* (This seems to be the measuring stick by which to judge this style of music, so I might as well use it). There is nothing really innovative about *Burn* but it is a really good reworking of what has come before.

In contrast to NIN, Chris Randall lacks the vocal intensity of Trent Reznor. This album feels more like a calm introspection as opposed to the psychological onslaught of NIN. Instead of screaming like Reznor about how much he wants to "Fuck you like an animal," Chris Randall whispers about how he would like "to be inside you" on "Inside."

This self-examination turns some other dark corners as well. On "Dispossessed," Randall reveals "I'm all tied up in your existence and I don't care if I die/Cause I never did want to be anything but what I saw inside your eyes."

Although I enjoyed this CD and thought it was very well done, I could not get over the feeling that I was listening to watered-down NIN. I would hate to think that industrial music is getting stagnant already. Don't look for anything new here, but if you are looking to get on the industrial bandwagon, this would be a perfect jumping point.

NEIL FRASER

In The Mūd
Scatter The Mud
BMG

If you're in the mood for *In The Mūd*, then you're craving a beautifully mellow celtic album with a truly Canadian mix of influences. The four members of Scatter The Mud blend guitar, bass, drums, whistles, Highland Pipes, the bodhran, flutes, and voices to create "slightly muddified" combinations of Irish jigs, Highland pipe tunes, and traditional songs.

Half of the first track is the song "Leis An Lurighan." I immediately loved this tune because I know that sometime in my Scottish music upbringing I have heard it before. The next track consists of a very jazzy bassline underlying Irish jigs as played on the Highland pipes. It's a combination that really works.

Most of the tracks turned out by the Calgary-based band are just good Irish tunes that are great to listen to while relaxing at the end of the day. One song called "The Peeler and the Goat" has really funny lyrics — it's a satire about "oppression by the police (peelers) in Ireland." The rest of the album consists of slow jigs and reels that sound great because they are well played and the voices harmonize really well.

Just a small warning: don't listen to this album if you're really tired because the music is so soothing it will put you to sleep!

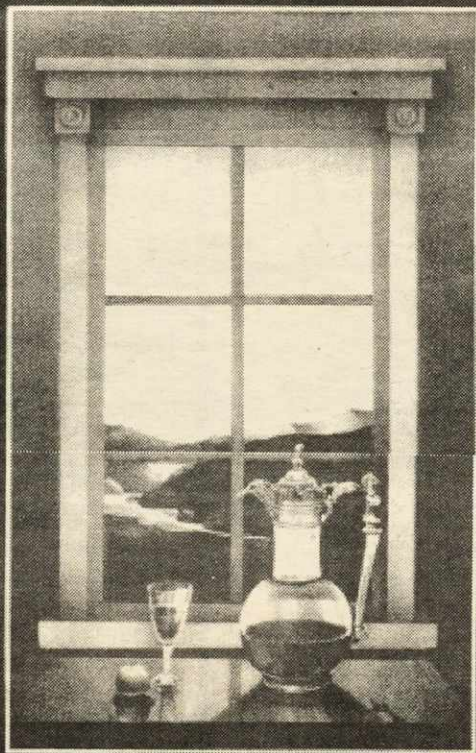
JENNIFER MACISAAC

The wait is over

1995 Winner of the Canadian Authors Association Award

Waiting for Time

The sequel to *Random Passage*



A novel
Bernice Morgan

BOOKS

Waiting for Time
by Bernice Morgan
Breakwater Books, 232 pages

BY ANDY POTTER

A few weeks ago, writing about Bernice Morgan's first novel, *Random Passage*, I noted that it's a treat to read a simple saga and be transported beyond the mundane. It's a rarer treat to read a second novel that shines as brightly as its predecessor.

Morgan's *Waiting for Time* is such a jewel. I'm not sug-

gesting that it's a masterpiece destined to rise to the top of ivory towers the world over. However, its power and simple eloquence seem destined to reach far beyond our shores. As well they should.

Waiting for Time presents a sweeping account of the grip that the North Atlantic holds on Newfoundland. For centuries, life on the Rock has been defined by the sea, and cod or no cod, it always will be.

The novel juxtaposes past and present; it expands and retells the story of *Random Passage* by weaving together two narrative threads — one contemporary, the other

retrospective. Morgan shuns the symbolist and meta-fictional flourishes favoured by modernists, and yet the story never lags — the pages fly by. The novel's modest narrative style is both refreshing and soothing. The exotic, quixotic nature of Newfoundland life, the smell of brine, the sound of foghorns — all propel the reader forward.

Morgan rarely makes a false narrative step. Her characterizations are subtle, understated, and hence perfectly convincing; each gesture, each spoken word rings true. Listen to Mary Bundle, the nineteenth century matriarch of the Cape: "Always in need of savin' and never saved, this place is. Waitin' for time, Ned [her husband] used ta call it — 'we'um just waitin' for time, maid. Just waitin' 'til our ship comes in,' he'd say. Well, I allow our ship got sunk off the Funks!"

Morgan is equally adept at rendering the harsh reality of contemporary outpost life. A self-centered relative is described as "the kind to do whatever made her most comfortable. The kind that always ends up somewhere like California."

Waiting for Time is an enduring sea yarn, one that reaches far beyond fleeting California dreams. Therein lies a large part of its simple charm and genius.

Editor's note: This is the second of Andy Potter's two reviews of Newfoundland author Bernice Morgan. The sequel to Random Passage, Waiting For Time won the 1995 Canadian Authors Association Award as well as the 1995 Raddall Atlantic Fiction Award for best fiction book in Atlantic Canada.