

# GENRECID

## MICHAEL EDWARDS

Kurt Cobain died on the 8th of April of this year; it was also the day that the last Brunswickan for the term came out, so I never did get a chance to make any sort of comment on the whole sad incident. Time has passed and although I don't want to get into an in-depth discussion on suicide, I will say that Kurt was a very talented musician who stood head and shoulders above the rest of the very bland Seattle scene. It was a very sad loss for the music world.

Being a bit of a cynic, I was expecting a plethora of those horrid 'cash in' releases that seem to follow the death of a musician; it didn't happen. But now the inevitable release of their *Unplugged In New York* session has come upon us (and there may also be a second album collecting rarities to follow soon). The *Unplugged* album includes a couple of songs that didn't

make it onto the television broadcast, giving fourteen songs in total. Its kinda tough attempting to evaluate this album

without thinking it as an epitaph to both Kurt and Nirvana as that's what it is really - their final recorded work. As I may have said before, only well-written songs can stand up to this sort of acoustic performance where they are stripped practically naked. This seems particularly true for

Nirvana who have, on occasion, hidden both lyrics and music behind a wall of noise. Instead they opt for

expected that to be someone like Richard Hell or Tom Verlaine.

Its not a very cheerful album; I don't think anyone expected it to be. The circumstances make it feel very bleak; in retrospect, sections of the lyrics seem darker and more significant than they actually are. Even the jokes and chat being exchanged by the members of the



Krist Novoselic

Dave Grohl

Kurt Cobain

band on stage can't help to remove that desolate feeling. *Unplugged* does capture Nirvana at their most haunting; this performance is a fitting elegy for a gifted performer who never really wanted fame. Yet now his immortality is assured; one of life's little ironies I guess.

In addition to the eight self-penned songs, there are six cover versions which help to show the many influences that the band had. Some come as no shock such as the Vaselines and the Meat Puppets, with two of the Puppets performing on their songs. But the more surprising selections are David Bowie's 'The Man Who Sold The World' and Leadbelly's 'Where Did You Sleep Last Night' - Kurt announces that Leadbelly is his, and the band's, favourite performer where most people may have

The last Aerosmith album (which came out in 1993), *Get A Grip*, has sold more than 10 million copies worldwide, and also spawned five hit singles. And all five of these singles appear on their 'new' album, the inspiringly titled *Big Ones*. Its another of those 'Greatest Hits' albums that always seem to come out just in time for the approaching festive season. I

even wonder if I can actually call it a 'greatest hits' album as it simply covers their last three albums, although they do stick on two new songs and a rare track from last year's *Beavis And Butthead Experience* (which also featured a track by Nirvana called 'I Hate Myself And I Want To Die'; another of life's little ironies?). So my main question is just who is going to buy this? Aerosmith fans? After all, a third of the tracks are on their last CD. It just stinks of a horrible marketing ploy which I am quite sure will succeed magnificently.

Let's put my cynicism aside for a few minutes and talk about the music. Well, its Aerosmith; you all know what to expect - the more palatable side of heavy rock with a healthy amount of innuendo thrown in (especially on the earlier songs). There are plenty of loud guitars and some of those slower songs that are so popular these days (like 'Crying...'); its almost impossible not to like them just a little bit even if you won't admit it. I know I won't.

Those two new songs are fairly forgettable; hardly a reason to buy this unless you are one of those anal fans that needs to have everything they have ever recorded. But if you are, you've probably bought it by now anyway. Sigh. You should probably save your money for something more rewarding like *Bat Out Of Hell 3* which must be coming out soon.

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