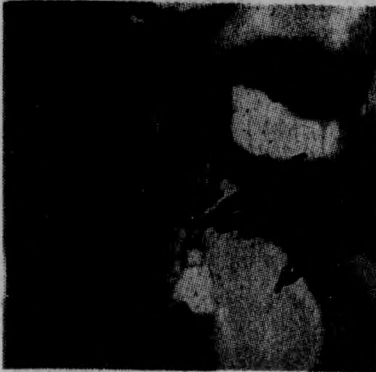


CD Reviews



GLUELEG
CLODHOPPER
EMI

Glueleg's first full length release, *Heroic Doses*, vaulted the band to the top of the Canadian independent scene. Their latest release, *Clodhopper*, should prove to rank them as one of the top Canadian major label bands. The album is tighter and crisper sounding than Glueleg's previous releases, and while their sound has changed slightly with Andrew Charters taking over bass and Andrew Wyse focusing more on keyboards than saxophone, it is still catchy and highly original. Starting off with the first single "Pistons," *Clodhopper* never fails to impress the entire way through, and the album is so strong that almost every song could be a potential single. The best of the best on the album include the '70s sounding "Mrs. Petrie," the intense "Stack It," and "Titania." One of the best albums of the year.

• CHUCK TEED



THE CRANES
POPULATION FOUR
BMG

After only existing in underground circles since the '80s, The Cranes are finally surfacing. Their Nick Crane inspired music is mixed with a pop feel on their latest album, *Population Four*, but still retains its sombre and eloquent style. The lead singer's (Alison Shaw) haunting, almost childlike, voice is both powerful and unique in today's heavily populated female vocal music scene. Although The Cranes hit the Top 30 in the UK, they are still fairly unknown in North America, this may be due to the distinct Brit-pop flavour of their music. Though it is a return to their old sound, track six, "Sweet Unknown," with its melancholy lyrics and acoustic music, is the best on this album. The Cranes' songs are ethereal yet have an intrinsically personal feel to them. They are simple yet filled with tension and glide effortlessly from darkness into light. *Population Four* seems a natural progression for The Cranes.

• JESSICA AUDLEY



LUSCIOUS JACKSON
FEVER IN FEVER OUT
EMI

Luscious Jackson hasn't changed too dramatically with *Fever In Fever Out*, but that's not too bad. The opening track, "Naked Eye," is reminiscent of Garbage, but the remainder of the disc is extremely mellow. Thanks to legendary producer Daniel Lanois, though, the album is wonderfully textured. The distinct percussion beats and wailing, droning music combine to enhance the mood put forth by the lyrics, something Luscious Jackson has certainly improved upon with this effort.

• PETER J. CULLEN & ANTHONY DAVIS



V/A
THE TARANTINO CONNECTION
UNIVERSAL

If these songs make you recall the film images they were played in conjunction with, then Quentin Tarantino knows he's done his job.

Tarantino states that using the appropriate song for the right scene "is about as cinematic a thing as you can do," which would partially explain why his film soundtracks are so popular. And now *The Tarantino Connection* compiles tunes from those hit movies: *Pulp Fiction*, *Reservoir Dogs* and *Natural Born Killers*, to name but a few.

Although songs like "Misirlou" by Dick Dale, "Little Green Bag" by George Baker Selection, Leonard Cohen's "Waiting for the Miracle," and the Cowboy Junkies' cover of "Sweet Jane" have attracted much attention in the past, the album is rounded out by lesser cuts from Dire Straits, Combustible Edison and The Blasters. And if you're interested in Tarantino's choice for movie tunes, chances are that you probably own the original soundtracks in the first place.

Although two short tracks of dialogue from Tarantino himself accompany the music, the best reason for purchasing it would be for The Mavericks' "Foolish Heart," and the classic "Stuck In the Middle with You" by Stealer's Wheel. But *The Tarantino Connection* is nothing you haven't heard before. More than once, anyway.

• PETER J. CULLEN



DAFT PUNK
S/T
VIRGIN/EMI

Welcome to the twisted sounds of Daft Punk. How does one make a Daft Punk? Well, start off with a bit of '90s techno, a bit of the early '80s rap movement and a whole lot of the '70s style and groove, blend it using a nice slow speed... and voila! You're looking at one helluva good sound. Daft Punk is Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo, and they have come to us from the land of fine wine and finer food, and now good music - France to be less ambiguous. If you're in Whigfield withdrawal and looking for a quick fix, look elsewhere; only serious dance music fans need apply. You won't find any honey-throated diva on this CD. Instead you'll find two guys crafting what I consider to be a masterpiece. Their sound is quite unlike anything that I've ever heard before. The analogy at the beginning sums up their sound the best: became aware of the Daft Punk phenomenon last year when I listened to the *Wipeout* soundtrack. The soundtrack included other greats such as: Orbital, Underworld, Chemical Brothers, Leftfield, The Prodigy and of course, our genius frenchmen, Daft Punk. Their track on that CD, entitled "Musique," left me speechless. Don't ask me to tell you what songs are good, because neither you nor I have the time. Needless to say, the soles of my shoes have worn thin from all the boogie-ing I've been doing since coming into the possession of this little treasure. I now feel that I'm ready for the lead role in *Flashdance 2*.

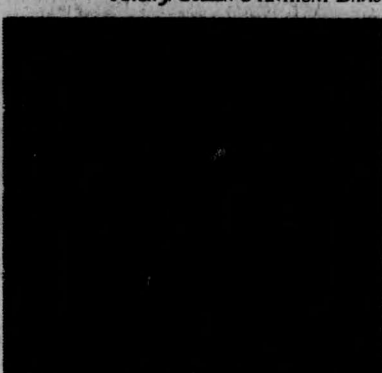
• DENNIS GERMAN



AZ YET
S/T
BMG

Like Boyz II Men? Like All-4-One? Then you're sure to like Az Yet! Az Yet is a very talented R&B group, and right from go their music takes you! Adding credibility to the band, the track "Last Night" was in Eddie Murphy's movie, *The Nutty Professor*. Az Yet is more into the slow R&B stuff and most of the tracks on the CD are love songs (really cool and soft). There are, of course, some first-hand tracks on the CD, and these are not bad either, but they are not as good as the slow stuff they have for the rest of the album. The album is a definite 'must-have' for all R&B lovers.

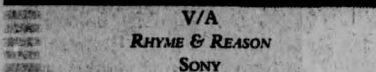
• DANIEL OWUSU-AFARI



VERUCA SALT
EIGHT ARMS TO HOLD YOU
UNIVERSAL

Veruca Salt's popularity grows from pretty powerful guitars and the enchanting voices of Nina Gordon and Louise Post, but that's the extent of it. Although they have seemed to cultivate a genuine fan base, the band lacks the cool riffs that make groups like the Foo Fighters bona fide rockers, and their musical depth is fairly limited. But Veruca Salt carve out a name for themselves through sheer energy and 'wake-me-up' choruses - attributes that don't go unrewarded in the realm of radio rock.

• PETER J. CULLEN



V/A
RHYME & REASON
SONY

The Dogg Pound, MC Eight, KRS-One, Heliah Skeljah - name them and they are on the CD! This soundtrack features some of the best rap artists! Well, from the few names above you probably have already guessed that most of the tracks featured on the CD are gangsta rap! Well, with The Dogg Pound can you expect any less! Anyway, it also has tracks by various combinations of rap artists. The first track for instance is by Mack 10 & Tha Dogg Pound. There are also some amazing combinations like Busta Rhymes together with Eight Ball and MJG. Also, Ras Kass and Heliah Skeljah combine to do a track together. This is awesome since you usually get to hear some of your favourite rap artists come together in a rap! If you especially like gangsta rap, you'll love this one!

• DANIEL OWUSU-AFARI



JANE JENSEN
COMIC BOOK WHORE
INTERSCOPE

A bit of off-key caterwauling and some intriguing lyrics help Jane Jensen push a quality product. With a voice similar to Tori Amos but with the temperament of a semi-restrained Courtney Love, Jensen shines on tracks like "Luv Song" and "King." Notably, too, is *Comic Book Whore's* production quality; the album is wonderfully textured, fitting into the realm of Depeche Mode for sound. And from listening to her anguished lyrics, Jensen's obviously a girl with a problem, and there ain't no cure.

• PETER J. CULLEN

FOR REAL
FREE
BMG

For Real is a cool R&B group with some really mellow stuff. This is a really good album. The first few tracks were like R&B with a blend of dance and pop (so this brought out a whole different style). The tracks on the album are good all-around so that some of the music is good dance music and then there is some good slow stuff and then the really mellow stuff to relax to. There's more slow stuff and mellow stuff than dance music though. Sometimes For Real sounds like SWV, but of course, they have their own style of background vocals, etc. This is a good album - for real!

• DANIEL OWUSU-AFARI

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