

ARTS

Casino worth the gamble

by Mike Raycraft

Blue Rodeo
Casino
WEA Records

There is a very old vaudeville joke that goes something like this: "What's high in the middle and round at both ends?" Answer: O-H-I-O, get it, OHIO.

Though by today's standards this passes off as bad humor, the essence of Blue Rodeo's latest release, *Casino*, is quite similar. Not that *Casino* is in itself a bad joke, but there are two very enjoyable ends separated by a middle that does not serve justice to the album's entirety.

The opening cuts, "Til I am Myself Again," "What am I Doing Here," and 5 a.m. (a love song), are fine examples of what Blue Rodeo can do best: orchestrating a likeable, unique blend of country-rock-blues filled with the usual hurtin' lyrics and rhythmic twangs on guitar provided by Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor.

Though the tempo is energetically up-beat, there are sentiments of self-doubt; "I know what's passing me by, when I look in the mirror, sometimes I see, traces of some other guy", touched with sprinkles of bitter-sweet humor; "sometimes I



Bazil Donovan, Bob Wiseman, Jim Cuddy, Greg Keelor, and Mark French (left to right) comprise Toronto's own Blue Rodeo. *Casino* proves that this band is not a "freaked out flathead hollow-eyed hallucination."

wish we didn't know how to talk, and as we sort out the who said you said who said I said, I only wish I came a little better prepared."

Following is the slower, subdued sounds of "Montreal" which keeps

Casino in balance thus maintaining its flow.

That flow is cut short however by the fairly forgettable "Last Laugh." The only thing worth remembering about this song is a lesson once learned to stay away from Tequila:

as much as possible. One mention of "You were drunk on the silver" was all I needed to hear.

"Trust Yourself," "Two Tongues," and "Time" are a revival of the band's sound vis-a-vis their previous release *Diamond Mine*. "Trust Yourself" in fact plays as if it should have been on D.M. There are striking similarities in '60s funk-adelic style through guitar, bass and keyboard sounds "Two Tongues" also attempts to revitalize the sounds of yester-year with its hard-edge guitar and pounding Hammond organ riffs a.k.a Lenny Kravitz. There are even lyrical attempts to match the attempts at sound: "You're a freaked out flathead hollow-eyed bad hallucination."

The drive behind "Time" relies on more of a new-wave push but as a hook inserts flighty harmony vocals reminiscent of early California rock.

The closing tracks "After the Rain" and "You're Everywhere" are among the best on the album.

"After the Rain" is a beautiful piece equal in every way to that of its predecessor "Try." Finishing with "You're Everywhere" the band ends *Casino* on a fittingly flat-out, highly rambunctious note.

Though there is nothing out of the ordinary on this record, on the whole *Casino* is an enjoyable slab of vinyl.

The band's first for WEA does produce some exciting moments. Unfortunately, Blue Rodeo's attention seems apparently diverted by their pursuit of many alternative sounds. Thus as a consequence the potential of a really great album is manifested into only a good album. Still, *Casino* is indeed worth a spin or two.



***Casino* produces some exciting moments but the Rodeo guys' attention seems diverted by too many musical styles.**

Dead make intricately carved music

by "Switch"

Dead Can Dance
Aion
Polygram/4AD

Gregorian chant, Elizabethan chamber music, Italian traditional with Celtic overtones form the essence of Dead Can Dance.

The music of Brendan Perry and Lisa Gerrard is like a rare perfume, rich and luxurious yet elusive and mysterious.

Aion forms a pagentry of sound which uses the voice as an instrument as complexly and majestically as a harp.

Aion, the sixth release from D.C.D. is the follow-up to the solid *The Serpent and the Egg* L.P.

Perry's earthy ballads are once again found to be the ideal compli-

ment to Gerrard's ethereal mezzo intricacies.

Aion takes the listener through the world of sound, to a locale unrecognizable but distinctly familiar. Through the use of voice, synthesizers as well as traditional instruments audio art is created with no equal in the field.

Out of the twelve tracks, only the two sung by Perry are in English, yet lovers of the true purity of sound will not be phased by foreign words.

Dead Can Dance, unlike the Coc-teau Twins, compose music with history, and regality. Having the opportunity to experience them live resulted in a fresh view of the virginity of sound. The value of the Dead, who very definitely can dance, is not even so much inherent in the music itself, but in the atmosphere which is so delicately created by their talents.



A detail from Hieronymus Bosch's painting entitled "The Garden of Delights." Or the CD cover for Dead Can Dance's *Aion*. Either way it works.

**Arts writers!
Excal will be
discussing its
upcoming edi-
torial elections
this Wed. at 4
pm. Please
attend**

FALL/WINTER 1990/91 SESSION

**Keep in mind
The last day to petition for permission to register
late for Winter Term courses is:**

**FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 8, 1991**

This notice is a final reminder. Students who have not paid their academic fees and applicable late service charges by January 18, 1991 were notified that enrolment in Winter Term courses had been cancelled.

Any student wishing to be registered was advised of the need to petition for permission to register late. Petitions which demonstrate administrative default on the part of a University office or cover compassionate reasons are considered. The Registrar's decision is final.

Petitions must be submitted in writing. The appropriate form is available from the Registrar's Office, Suite C130 West Office Building, telephone 736-5155.

Office of the Registrar
January 4, 1991

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