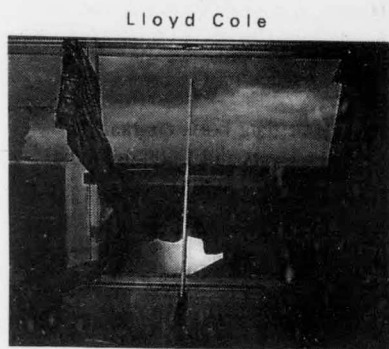


GENRECIDER

MICHAËL EDWARDS

SIXTH ROW CENTRE (OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...)

I should have wrote a little something about Lloyd Cole last week really, but space prohibited me to do that. Never mind. Anyway, he has come back with his best album in quite some while and deserves some attention for that reason alone. *Love Story* finds Lloyd rediscovering the kind of songwriting that made his debut *Rattlesnakes* so engaging. It is a very mellow, moody album that keeps its feet firmly in melancholia, and relies almost wholly on acoustic guitars rather than the orchestra which turned up on his last album. Essentially, he hasn't really changed all that much from those early days when he was catering to an audience who wanted to hear intelligent pop music - witness 'Like Lovers Do' or 'Sentimental Fool' for evidence of that. A real return to form,

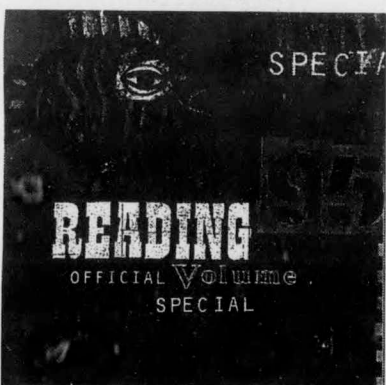


Lloyd Cole

and now all we need is the same kind of comeback for Roddy Frame.

Although not too common over here, the *Volume* series of CD and magazine really is quite popular in the UK. The fourteenth issue has just come out, and it is their most epic yet. Put together to celebrate the Reading Festival, it features 36 songs spread out over two discs and all the tracks are either new songs, new mixes, live versions or something similar. Or in other words, a whole bunch of new stuff by all your favourite bands including Teenage Fanclub, Stereolab, White Zombie, Mudhoney and Guided By Voices. And did I mention the 192 page magazine that comes with it? Well, maybe I should as it has interviews with all the bands

and also details some of their records. Lots of good reading. But the best thing about *Volume* is the way that it features bands just in the process of breaking through - it is a good way to become familiar with new bands like Cast, Heavy Stereo and Prolapse. This is one of the best compilations I have seen in quite some time, and definitely worth picking up.



Let's face it - Sonic Youth's years spent on the major labels haven't been that impressive. Patchy at best. So I wasn't counting the days until the new album (their 12th incidentally...) turned up. But *Washing Machine* is their best album for quite some time. Despite the fact that it seems to be getting more or less panned in the press, but I'm swimming against the current - I like it.



It has pop songs ('Becuz'), weird guitar stuff ('The Diamond Sea'), and a lovely duet between Kim Gordon and Kim Deal ('Little Trouble Girl'). They can still do eclecticism better than most. Maybe they are mellowing a little bit, but there is enough of their attitude of old to keep them interesting. They'll always be interesting.

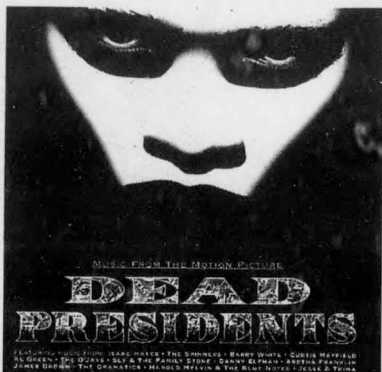
If you ask anyone who has seen the movie *Seven* what the first thing that got their attention, there is a good chance they would mention the opening credits. It's hard to describe them as anything but unconventional, and that was helped by a very strange remix of Nine Inch Nails' 'Closer'. But is it on the soundtrack album? Nope. Or is the David Bowie song that they use for the closing credits? Once more the answer is no. This is kind of confusing as the main music I remembered from the film isn't on this CD while songs by Haircut 100 and Gravity Kills which I can't recall hearing at all turn up instead. Very bizarre. In saying that, the original music composed by Howard Shore does capture the darkness of the film, but I really did want to hear some Nine Inch Nails.



And staying with soundtracks for the next little while (as I have five more to work my way through), we move on to *Strange Days*. The biggest curio on this album is Juliette Lewis working her way through a PJ Harvey song. While it might not be the most horrible thing I have heard, she won't be giving up her acting career for the next little while. The rest of the soundtrack has an extremely varied feel to it, something that means this CD will probably only appeal to people who have seen the film. And that doesn't include me. To be honest, the strongest tracks come from Skunk Anansie and Tricky, and it would make a lot more sense to pick up their respective albums rather than put up with all the other filler. I guess I'm

just not all that impressed with getting Ray Manzarek out of retirement to play with Prong. He should probably stick to writing music for yet-to-be discovered Jim Morrison poems.

Next up is *Dead Presidents*, which is a really good album. But what else could you expect from a soundtrack



that features songs by Isaac Hayes, James Brown, Aretha Franklin and Al Green? Exactly. One of the good things about films that focus on events set in the past is that they can use old songs without the whole thing seeming tacky. It justifies a nostalgic approach. So don't expect anything new and exciting here. If you have any kind of interest in music then you will



already own quite a few of these songs, so this is one to take a close look at before buying.

It has been said that the worst films have the best soundtracks. Now, this may not always be the case, and I haven't actually seen *Mortal Kombat*, but I am guessing that it won't be

cleaning up at the Oscars. But seeing it does have such a good soundtrack, let's just assume that it is a terrible movie. The music falls into three real categories - industrial, techno or thrash metal. More or less. Think KMFDM, Orbital and Napalm Death. They do cheat though and stick on some songs that don't even turn up in the film at all, but it does give you even more of that oh-so-important value for money stuff. Anyway, any CD that can make the theme tune to the video game seem like a cool song (thanks to the Utah Saints) can't be all bad.

Mallrats takes the approach that is so special to Quentin Tarantino. That is, stick some dialogue from the movie between the songs so that



people can go around quoting it ad nauseum to all their friends. Thanks a lot Quentin. Some of the dialogue is actually quite funny, such as the catchily titled 'Kryptonite Condoms'. But it all fades away in comparison to the music. It always helps to get some of the bands that the kids like to turn in a new and exclusive track, and both Belly and Weezer do come up with the goods. If those bands aren't among your favourites, try Bush or silverchair. Or maybe some older songs from Girls Against Boys, or the very wonderful Archers Of Loaf, or Canada's very own Thrush Hermit. A nice mix, some nice dialogue and a nice soundtrack. It even makes me want to see the movie.

...much more music...much more music...much more music...

Ozzy Osbourne - Ozzmosis

Back in high school two people influenced me greatly: Ozzy Osbourne and Jesus Christ. Well, Ozzy has resurrected his career and is back sans bats with *Ozzmosis*. This album keeps in line with *No More Tears*. It's relaxed, it's not driven by demons or evil. Nope, all you will find in this album is good honest Ozzy at his best. For a guy near 50 he sure does have a palatable whiny voice. Black Sabbath buddy, Geezer Butler, who is just

as old as Ozzy is back strumming his bass and shaking his black curly hair like a washing machine on spin cycle. I'm somewhat disappointed that Randy Castillo has left and replaced with Deen Castronova. And of course Zakk Wylde still swings his axe superfluously.

The best tracks are 'Perry Mason', the first single, a soft tune 'The Ghost Behind Your Eyes'. The major rocker on this one is 'The Thunder Underground'. Check out the Ozz-man for what could be his last album but somehow I doubt it.

- Sam Morgan

NOFX - I Heard They Suck Live

This album was recorded during three different shows. During the first performance however the band was drunk and the recording was unsuitable for the record. The other two shows which were recorded managed to capture the same raw energy which is NOFX. Each song is played to speed and could be easily substituted for a studio recording. In other words, clean cut and live.

One good thing about this album is that it includes the shouting and cursing between the band and the crowd which is a bonus since it gives a person who has never seen the band live a feel for the

experience. It is also good to see that they are not trying to please radio stations by bleeping out all sorts of profanities.

It seems while most bands are going for major labels and major money NOFX are going the independent route by putting this album through Fat Wreckords. They even changed the lyrics to "L.A." in order to ridicule the East bay scene with lines like "I got more piercings than you!!!!". It is also good to hear songs from their various albums as opposed to promoting their latest album.

- Marc Landry

