

The good, the bad, and the trendy

reviews by Brent Jeffery

Aerosmith's Greatest Hits
Aerosmith
Columbia FC 36865

Myself, having always been a partisan Aerosmith fan, I have a soft spot for their Greatest Hits album. A soft spot for this record is not necessary, though, because it is hot.

It contains, naturally, Aerosmith's greatest hits and they are indeed great. With representation from each of their studio albums and their live album, it is the final summation of their career as a band.

Aerosmith is a no-nonsense, rock and roll band and on this record there is no special production trickery; they let their music tell the story in such songs as "Walk This Way", "Back In The Saddle", "Remember (Walking In The Sand)" and the classic "Dream On". Tyler's razor-edged vocals and Perry's searing guitar come through with a vengeance; a delight to be heard.

For all devout and even the not-so-devout Aerosmith fans this record is a rock and roll must.

Get Lucky
Lovember
Columbia FC 37638

Lovember became Canada's hottest act in many years with the release of their self-entitled debut album in 1980. At a time when the release of an equally strong follow-up album might have broken them worldwide, they come up with a dud. This record is boring, typical, mindless rock and roll. A huge disappointment.

The album starts badly with "Working For The Weekend" and gets worse with "When It's Over", a terribly repetitive two-chord song. "Gangs In The Street" is little more than a reworked "Turn Me Loose". Really boys: We may not be overly demanding, but we are not stupid.

The few saving graces (and there are very few) are in the songs "Lucky Ones", "Watch Out", and "Take Me to the Top", all still very mediocre.

It would be expedient to fault one person for this lacklustre effort but the majority of Lovember tunes are group-written. It is hard to understand, then, just how they could go from quality to garbage in one year. Some of the blame must be given to the producers, Bruce Fairbairn and Paul Dean, for not doing something, anything, to liven up this record. Their incompetent and uninspired attempts are inexcusable from professionals of their stature.

So whatever you do, resist any impulse to go out and buy this trash, you will only be disappointed. This record is the failure of the year.



Rocktober '81
Kelly's
ROCT 081

Well, I took a chance (not much of a chance really, since two bucks is peanuts to risk and bought Kelly's Rocktober '81 promotional album for novelty's sake. Much to my delight the album is quite good.

It is a collection of 12 songs by various artists with various styles. If you are a blues fan there are two very good tunes, "Crank It Up" by Mary Burns and "Long Distance Feeling" by Dutch Mason. Heavy Metal? There are songs by Goddo, Anvil, Riot, and Triumph. Rockabilly is represented by the Bopcats, with an excellent pop tune from

Jona Lewie (of "In The Kitchen At Parties" fame) and mainstream rock from Inner Sleeve.

"Am I Crazy, Crazy" (Goddo), "Buddy This Is It" (Bopcats), and "Born To Be Wild" (Riot) stand as the best overall songs here with the others coming a close second.

For an inexpensive, quality novelty album this one is a sure thing.

The Best of Blondie
Blondie
CHR 1337

Blondie is a versatile group capable of many different styles as evidenced by their The Best of Blondie release. With such diverse songs as "Dreaming", "The Tide Is High", "Sunday Girl" and "Rapture" the above is a fairly safe statement.

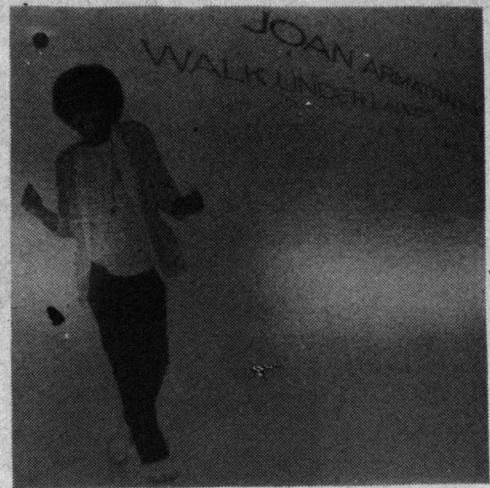
The thing that has always bothered me about Blondie is how they often sold out for commercial acceptance. This album also shows that aspect of their music very well.

The disco influenced song "Heart of Glass" was the tune which broke them onto the charts but it was songs such as "Hanging On the Telephone" which gave them their credibility. With a mass audience now assured their persistence in "playing this safe bet" has lost them a lot of respect as a progressive group. They latched onto the disco acceptance of past years and used it to ensure wide marketability (i.e. commercial success). That, my friends, is unforgivable in the music world.

Their choices of "greatest hits", though fairly solid, can still be questioned. Why were songs like "Denise" and "11:59" ignored for such inferior items as "(I'm Always Touched by Your) Presence Dear" and "Atomic". And true to form (unfortunately) they have jumped on the latest trend of doing one verse in French, and reworked "Sunday Girl" to fit the mould. Disgusting!

This "Best of" album is then categorically good, but trendy.

Walk Under Ladders
Joan Armatrading
A&M SP 4876



With the recent release of *Walk Under Ladders* Joan Armatrading has fashioned an interesting album for herself and her fans. The album has a number of things which make it a success; its diversity of styles, its good sax/horn solos and its tasteful use of synthesizers are all factors. The greatest factor however is her voice. It has such a depth and tonal quality about it that it is adept at whatever variations the style requires.

"I'm Lucky", "The Weakness In Me", and "No Love" let her voice soar and work with the melodies which make these the best songs on the record, almost worth the list price alone.

A good effort, there is something for everyone here.



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