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Handsome
 Handsome
 Epic Records

My expectations for this CD were shattered after the first listen. Since Handsome, from what

I understood, was the result of the splitting of the famed quartet, Quicksand, I had expected more of a New York City hardcore-sounding album. In actual fact, Handsome does contain ex-guitarists of both Helmet and Quicksand (Tom Capone and Peter Mengede respectively) but they have strayed from their roots and have created a different style of New York hardcore.

Handsome churns out a powerhouse rhythm section, but it has a more dramatic, catchy, anthem feel to it. This was present in old Quicksand albums, yet was hidden amongst the load of guitars.

Fans of these two musicians may be disappointed with the guitar work on this album, due

to the lack of a hardcore presence. Don't get me wrong, this album is powerful in its own way, it just wasn't what I expected based on their older work. Handsome has its strong points, for instance "Lead Belied" and a few other tracks contain very cool riffs, but the rest of the album seems to fall short.

If you're into melodic hardcore this is a great album, but if you're expecting a band similar to Helmet or Quicksand, a pass on this one is suggested.

TREVOR ROY

The Lost Highway
 Various Artists
 MCA

The Lost Highway soundtrack features new artists such as Nine Inch Nails and the increasingly popular Marilyn Manson along with classic performers such as David Bowie.

This compilation is derived from the *Natural Born Killers* soundtrack. For example, "I put a spell on you" by Jay Hawkins was featured on *Natural Born Killers*, and a cover by Marilyn Manson is also on *The Lost Highway* release. In fact, both of the soundtracks were produced by

Trent Reznor, who also happens to be the producer of his own band, Nine Inch Nails (NIN), and Marilyn Manson. With all of this producing, however, NIN and Marilyn Manson have similar sounds.

The direction of the two bands is reminiscent of early Alice Cooper and his many gimmicks. In the video for "A Perfect Drug", Reznor uses a cane, has facial hair and dances around rooms illuminated by strobe lights — possibly flashing some people back to Cooper's "Welcome to my Nightmare" phase.

Many would consider "A Perfect Drug", the new NIN release, to be a sell out. Rumour has it that the song is a reject from The Downward Spiral album; many

NIN fans feel that it should have stayed a reject. The song moves toward the popular stream of music, seeming more eerie and repetitive than past NIN.

Angelo Badalamenti, Reznor and Barry Adamson provide large portions of background music for the album. Two-thirds of the soundtrack is filled with music to represent the sometimes eerie, romantic and funky aspects of the movie.

As for songs with lyrics, Lou Reed comes off sounding a little more like a country musician and slightly less Bob Dylan-ish than usual. The Smashing Pumpkins contribution to this soundtrack, "Eye", sounds a bit like a guy singing to one of those preprogrammed beats on a cheap digital keyboard. This is all topped off with some rather Metallica-like riffs from Rammstein. When it comes to the punch, however, David Bowie gets first and last shot with two remixes of "I'm Deranged".

Lost Highway is an interesting soundtrack, but it may be worth more for its novelty than its quality.

TAMARA BOND



Homework
 Daft Punk
 Virgin Records

The first question I had when listening to this album was this: exactly what kind of music does Daft Punk create?

Homework is difficult to pigeon-hole into one genre. From what I could gather, it's mainly a



mixture of house, techno, ambient techno, British new wave, funk and even some pop. With all these different types of music, it should be no problem to make a wicked dance album, right? Well, that's where this review takes a slight turn.

I didn't hate this album, but it's not going to stay in my Discman forever. There are some good songs, but only two stand out above and beyond the rest. The coolest track is the current dance hit, "Da Funk", which you may already recognize from its innovative video featuring a character resembling McGruff the Crime Dog. The best elements of this song are its funky sound and its great bassline.

Another good track is "Around The World", which reminded me of the early 80s British New Wave sound — like something out of an old New Order album. It was good to hear Daft Punk breathe some life into an old style of music. Unfortunately, they could not keep that same gusto throughout the rest of the album.

A problem with this style of music is that if it isn't good, it makes you want to press the skip button on your CD player instead of dancing. There were way too many songs which annoyed me with repetitive beats and annoying sounds. All in all, *Homework* is a decent album; not the best, but far from the worst.

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