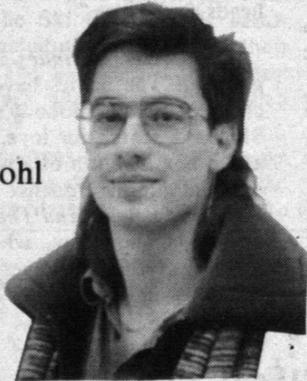


And now, presenting *The Gateway* year-end review of music for 1988. I asked four friends and colleagues with fairly divergent tastes in music for a top ten list of favourite albums released in or around 1988, and any attendant commentary that they cared to include. The results varied considerably, as you can read on and discover, but all gave honest viewpoints that will help you sort the year out for yourself or catch up on some of the good stuff you might have missed.

In Edmonton, 1988 was a banner year for concerts despite a few cancellations and postponements. Both Jazz City and the Edmonton Folk Music Festival were roaring artistic successes, while U of A students could catch up and coming acts on campus on a better than weekly basis at Dinwoodie and the SUB Theatre during the fall term. Earlier in the year, a series of heavy metal gigs graced the Coliseum, while the incredible variety of classical music events continued to grow, led by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.

In recorded music, compact discs continued to make inroads into vinyl's traditional territory. The new Penguin classical music guide claims that the major classical labels have discontinued pressing LPs as of the beginning of 1989; can releases in other genres be too far behind? Fears that the high price of CDs will have an adverse effect on independent musical releases are still unresolved, but pressing time at CD plants seems to be becoming more open, as suggested by the burgeoning number of titles available in all musical categories. And the trend towards lower CD prices further bodes well for even more universal acceptance of the new format.

As to the quality of music available, we'll let our various commentators have their say...



Greg Pohl

Ha! The New Year! Time for music critics to get self-indulgent! So here goes...

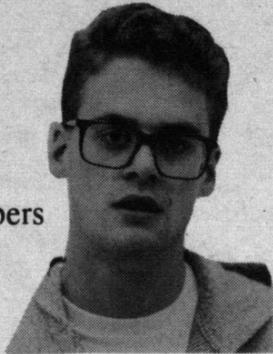
1988 was kind of a wasted year in music as far as I'm concerned. Sure, some good albums came out, but all too often it was like, "O.K., more of the same from the So-And-So's. It's probably good, but why can't they do something *different* for a change?"

Something which has left me profoundly disturbed is this continuing trend of re-popularizing old music. It seems that as soon as music is 15 to 20 years old, someone has to dig it up and sell it to a whole new generation of listeners. Around 1980 came the Pop Explosion, sort of a



Richard Thompson released yet another great album in 1988.

Ron Kuipers



So here we are, stuck like pigs in mud at the beginning of 1989. At this time of year we get that unexplainable urge to salvage through the dung heap of 1988, in search of something worthwhile. But I won't give you the top ten, because frankly, I don't know what they are. I will, however, give you ten examples of some pretty darn cool stuff. Here they are in no particular order:

1. **R.E.M. - *Green*** - A funny title for an orange album. The band isn't green either, as this is their sixth album. This is, however, a tour de force LP from the best big rock band of the eighties (sorry U2 fans). It maintains the band's guitar-based, rock & roll sound, while adding several new musical twists. Check it.

2. **Metallica - *And Justice For All...*** - The best metal band of all time. Even better than Motorhead. Metallica has become a force to be reckoned with, resting on Billboard charts for many weeks with little or no radio airplay. Searing, aggressive music with lyrics to match. *And Justice For All...* keeps Metallica's metal ball rolling. And it just keeps on gaining speed!

3. **The Pogues - *If I Should Fall From Grace With God*** - If only James Joyce himself were alive to hear this band. Good

second wave of Beatles music. Next came neo-psychedelia, and a second wave of progressive rock. Then in 1988, we'd worked our way up to a rehashing of the early '70s, with Guns'n'Roses, Def Leopard, and The Cult retreading the ground originally covered by Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin.

This is all well and good, but what has me worried is that right after Heavy Metal in the '70s came disco. Can we really survive a rediscovery of Lipps Inc., K.C. and the Sunshine Band, and the Bee Gees? I think 1989 will be the beginning of Neo-Disco. Our only hope is that a "Punk Rediscovery" will be hot on its platform heels.

Good news in 1988 was that the "alternative scene" in Edmonton is finally getting onto its feet again. The last two months have seen two new clubs open up, The Cabana and Bronx. As well, there are plans for a live club, File 13, set to open on Jan. 13. Hopefully these places will thrive in 1989.

At this point I'll mention my biggest disappointment of the year. After 4 fabulous albums, Shriekback has decided to start the aforementioned Neo-Disco movement with *Go Bang*. This LP is nothing more than vacuous club music. Fer Chrissakes, they even do a cover of "Get Down Tonight"! Then they do one good song at the end of the record, just so people will think: "well, they're still capable of doing good music, so maybe I'd better buy their next album..."

O.K., here it is finally, my personal favorites of 1988:

1. Peter Murphy - *Love Hysteria*
2. The Waterboys - *Fisherman's Blues*
3. Wire - *A Bell is a Cup Until it is Struck*
4. Downy Mildew - *Mincing Steps*
5. The Jazz Butcher - *Fishcotheque*
6. The Cocteau Twins - *Blue Bell Knoll*
7. Morrissey - *Viva Hate*
8. U2 - *Rattle and Hum*
9. Skinny Puppy - *Vivisect IV*
10. Ultra-Vivid-Scene - *Selftitled*

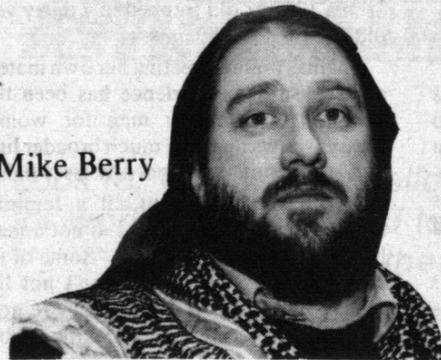
celtic music with rock & roll aggression. How this band ever got as big as they have escapes me. Aside from all the romping, this album is also very moving. But no matter what, it will keep the feet stompin' and the beer flowin'. They even throw in a charming Christmas carol.

4. **NOMEANSNO - *The Day Everything Became Nothing*** - A great EP from the best underground band in Canada today. I've heard them described as jazz/hardcore fusion, but that still doesn't hit the nail on the head. Heavily bass-oriented and unpredictable. Originality runs amok. Whatever you do, don't listen to what Slayde says.

5. **Spirit of the West - *Labour Day*** - Sometimes I need a break from all this speed and aggression. At these times, I'm often listening to this Canadian trio. Spirit carries the folk label with pride, waving their flag high. An intellectually serious album with good music. I hope they won't abandon humour and light-heartedness altogether. Though better live than on vinyl, they still make my list.

6. **Danzig - *Danzig*** - From the ashes of the Misfits and Samhain rises Danzig. For those of you expecting speed-metal, forget it. Just expect the hardest rock to be put on vinyl. If the fact that singer Glen Danzig probably sold his soul to Satan in the late seventies doesn't bother you, then this album is for you. They do what The Cult did on their last album, only ten times harder and better. Hide the women and children!

7. **Midnight Oil - *Diesel & Dust*** - This Aussie quintet really broke it open with this album, meeting with thundering commercial success. Combining basic Rock



Mike Berry

My top ten, in no particular order:

1. Mory Kante - *Akwaba Beach*
2. Tom Russell Band - *Road to Bayamon*
3. The Looters - *Flashpoint*
4. Igor Bril - *Before the Sun Sets*
5. Metallica - *And Justice For All*
6. Bobby King and Terry Evans - *Live and Let Live*
7. Fishbone - *Truth and Soul*
8. Motorhead - *Live: No Sleep At All*
9. Various Artists - *Genuine House-rockin' Music Volumes II and III*
10. Matt Bianco - *Indigo*

Honourable mentions:
 Lyle Lovett
 Various Artists - *Heartbeat of Soweto*
 Toumani Diabate
 Sugarcubes



R.E.M. in a 1985 promo photo. The most famous sons of Athens, Georgia struck paydirt by signing with WEA and managed to remain critics' darlings.

1988: The ye

with other elements such as industrial noise and horns, they make a powerful musical, as well as intellectual, statement. Though not as raw and pure as their early work, it deserves high praise nonetheless.

8. **Bad Brains - *Live*** - No original material here, just one of the best live recordings I've heard. The energy of these D.C. rastas really comes across. The album has some reggae, some fast rock, and some less-fast rock. H.R.'s voice also runs the gamut from tuneful melody to possessed screaming. The music defies any categorical description, borrowing from metal, reggae, hardcore, and rock. The only word to describe it is Power.

9. **Husker Du - *Warehouse: Song & Stories*** - The farewell double LP from the underground icons who almost made it big. The band combines folk melodies and rhythms with a pounding beat (the product of their underground days). Though actually released in late '87, it transcends time and should make any list.

10. **Mike Spindloe & the Gateway Squids - *Miss Deadline & Die*** - Fearless leadership and a good deal of alcohol will take this Edmonton group far. In their modesty, however, they would just like to give honorable mention to some artists that didn't make Ron's list. These are K.D. Lang and the Reclines, Dag Nasty, Die Kreuzen, Talking Heads, Public Enemy, Anthrax, Van Morrison, The Circle Jerks, not Prince, not U2, and definitely not The Beach Boys. AMEN.

Testament
 SNFU
 Bobby Brown
 Coroner
 At War
 Chet Baker's rereleased catalogue on the Dutch Crisscross label (3 LPs)



Randal Smathers

Allow me to begin with a short apology. I gave up slavishly following new releases with the debut of *Born in the USA*, Bruce Springsteen's first pop record, so if I list something which was actually released late in '87, tough noogies.

My favorite five albums of 1988 (I won't presume to call them the best) start with Steve Earle's *Copperhead Road*. On this, his second album, Earle has moved farther away from the cowboy image of *Guitar Town*. Instead of appealing to hateful good old boy truck drivers with beer bellies and tattoos that say "Emma-Lou", this album should attract hateful good old boy bikers with beer bellies and tattoos that read "Death", or "Scum", or "Die", or something.

Less rock and more 'billy is Dwight Yoakam's third album, *Buenos Noches From a Lonely Room*. Yoakam is maturing rapidly as a songwriter, as the comparative strength of his compositions on this record show. No longer reliant on cover tunes (as with his first two albums), Yoakam and his band twang and fiddle with the best of 'em.

Lyle Lovett is sort of a trendy-artsy c &