

# C A D R E A L B U M R E V I E W S



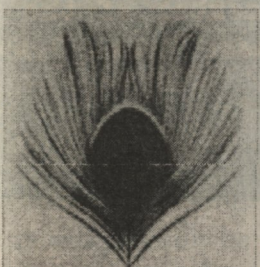
Marcy Playground  
Shapeshifter (7)  
EMI

From the band that brought you "x and Candy" comes some more of the same old offside lyrics and occasional straight-up rock tunes. Even with several boring, meaningless, overwrought slow songs, this album is still well worth a listen. Plus it has a kick-ass album cover to boot. Cool!



Rage Against the Machine  
The Battle of Los Angeles (9)  
Epic

A militant treatise on the rotting state of America's inner (and outer) cities, Rage pushes aside Korn and Limp Biscuit to reclaim the mantle for a style of music that they alone are capable of. A kind of sonic powerhouse for change and action; the band may be the only chance left for anything truly great to come out of the fusion of rock and hip-hop. Lead Singer Zack de la Rocha pulls no punches. ("I lick shots at the brutal charade") The freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the railroading of Leonard Peltier, and the sins of Christopher Columbus run through the background. The Battle of Los Angeles is a record that will be seen as a true statement for our times; and that statement will not be kind. Blood is being shed, the band says, and it is being shed by all of us. Bruyneel



Ash  
Nu-Clear Sounds (4.5)  
Dreamworks/Universal

It's not THAT bad. Some songs are OK. There's some neat blends of rock and hip-hop in it... there's a good visceral scream... I just don't really care about the music. It didn't do anything for me, especially after listening to Ben Harper's CD. Don't buy this unless you're a rabid fan... if then.

McQuaid

Ben Harper and The Innocent Criminals  
Burn To Shine (8)  
Virgin/EMI

This is one sweet album. Poetic songwriting, eclectic styles, and of course, more examples of Ben Harper's amazing talent with 6 and 12-string guitars. The songs can be fragile and emotional, or strong and heavy, but they all stick together well with great melodies, mini-soundscapes, Harper's great voice and lyrics, and... it's just good, OK? Take my word for it.



Big Bad Voodoo Daddy  
This Beautiful Life (6)  
Universal

It's not the best swing I've ever heard, but BBVD's stuff is always a safe bet for good quality, anyway. It's a good CD, but most of the songs aren't as strong as I think BBVD could make them. Scotty Morris still makes it a good listen, with a nifty version of "Ol' MacDonald", a nice little song called "Still In Love", plus some different and energetic tunes.

McQuaid



David Bowie  
hours... (8)  
EMI

I could listen to this for 'hours...' Like many musicians who have been so long in the public eye, Bowie has had his periods when he was less noticeable, but this CD should mark his resurgence into popular music. Bowie's ever changing style has created an astonishingly refreshing and strong album, which stands shoulder to shoulder with all of Bowie's past achievements. Haines

Rob Zombie  
American Made Music To Strip By (7)  
Geffen/Universal

Ya gotta love Rob Zombie. You'll never feel ripped off when you buy one of his CDs. It's one big piece of eye candy, with a disc of music, too! If you liked Hellbilly Deluxe, you should get this. Some of the songs on this remix album were better than the originals, but the reverse is also true. Therefore, only a seven. Also of note, it comes with more of Rob's art, concert photos, and no less than seven naked photos of his gal, Sheri "Kitty" Moon... if you like that kind of thing.  
McQuaid