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compact disc reviews

Sophie Zelmani
Sophie Zelmani
(Sony)

I took a chance on this album because Sophie Zelmani reminded me of Jewel, who is one of the many popular female musicians right now. True, one isn't supposed to rely on outward appearances, but I called this pretty good. Not only does she look like Jewel, but Sophie also sings like her. "I'd Be Broken" reminds me of Jewel's latest single whose title escapes me at the moment. Sophie's music is a little more country sounding, however, without the twang. I could definitely picture listening to this talented artist at one of the local music and dining establishments in downtown Charlottetown. Zelmani's music is quiet, calm and original. Some people are saying that there is a new wave of female musicians flooding the music industry. I don't know how "new" it is that women have been trying to make it in this industry, but if artist such as Sophie Zelmani are any indication of where the music industry is headed, then I say it's a refreshing change.

Rating: *** 1/2

- Emilie Adams

Donell Jones
My Heart
(LaFace Records)

Living on the Island, I don't get to listen to a lot of recent material, so even though this CD was available before Christmas last year, I am just hearing it now. So far, from what I've heard, this CD was well worth the wait.

There are 15 songs with no interludes, so you are definitely getting your money's worth. His best song of the album is "You Should Know" followed by a slow song called "I want you to Know." Speaking of slow songs, there are plenty of them and they all sound good enough to be put on one of my mixed slow song tapes, and believe me: not just any song makes it on my tapes.

Donell Jones has the same lyrical styles as one of my favourite artists, R.Kelly, and is produced by Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds, so you know I'm going to give him high marks. This was one of the best CDs I have reviewed for the Prints, so I'm going to give it 4.5/5 stars.

- Greg Lucas

The Age of Electric
Make a Pest a Pet
(God's Teeth Ethel/Mercury)

Does anyone remember these guys? The Age of Electric are the same band who sang "Ugly", which was in heavy rotation on Muchmusic for a while. Well, they're back in rotation at Much with the release of "Remote Control" their first single from *Make a Pest a Pet*. An interesting title which comes from the song "Cranky". I think these guys are far from pesty or cranky. I was trying to figure out who they sound like, and I couldn't quite put my finger on it, so consider that a good sign that these guys are original. Besides "Remote Control", I also really like "Unity or Grenadine" and "Scare Myself", which are two of the calmer songs on the album. This CD would be good driving music or background for a party. It's upbeat and kinda quirky (if a CD can be called quirky) and comes highly recommended by this reviewer.

Rating: ****

- Emilie Adams

The Soul Assassins/Chapter 1
(Columbia)

I've seen the ad for this CD about a thousand times, so when I saw it at the Panther Prints office, I couldn't resist the chance to review it. I mean, if Master T of Much Music says we should buy it, then it must be good, right? WRONG! I was very disappointed that this CD was not as good as it was advertised to be.

I thought that with all the great artists that I like such as Dr. Dre, Cypress Hill, KRS-ONE, and Mobb Deep, that this CD would be the buy of 1997. But after listening to it, I don't think it would be the buy of 1897! The biggest problem is that there is way too much talking and background noise in a lot of the songs. That kind of thing really annoys me, like when you give your friend money to buy a Moosehead Green, and they bring you a Labatt Ice. Another problem is that every song sounds the same, with the same beats and lyrics that make you want to turn it off.

I really didn't like this CD, so I'm not afraid to give it a 1.5 out of 5 rating.

- Greg Lucas

Alfonzo Hunter
Blacka Da Berry
(EMI)

For an unknown artist, Alfonzo really caught my attention when I first listened to his CD. When I looked at the CD case for the first time, I thought it would be another boring CD with another boring rip-off of other artists. That's why I was shocked when I got my first listen. He really has his own style of slow music that just makes you want to drop what you're doing and call your mate for a late night meeting at the Gazebo, if you know what I mean....

The CD contains 13 songs and they range from catchy beats that remind you of cruising in the summer to slow songs you'd listen to before and after you-know-what. My favourites are "Slow Motion" and "Everything".

I really like artists who have their own style, like D'Angelo and R.Kelly, so I'm going to give this CD 4 out of 5.

- Greg Lucas