

ARTS

& Entertainment



Music Reviews

Tomorrow Never Dies
Original Movie Soundtrack
(A&M)

Almost every single James Bond movie title track has gone on to become the number one song in the land for at least one week. This Bond opus includes Sheryl Crow singing a less than inspirational, and all out contrived recording of "Tomorrow Never Dies." Sure enough, the cheesy spy-like music is in the background, and we hear Ms. Crow whispering through the tune with as much effort as could be heard on her coffee break. Okay, so that's one song out of the 15 tracks that are offered, right? Well, yes, and no. In between Crow and k.d. lang's contribution "Surrender," we have twelve score compositions which are fine for the movie theatre but not so great for home listening pleasure. At the lower bookend, we have Moby finishing off the album with his track, "James Bond Theme," which will stay cool as long as the Mission Impossible theme song by the two other U2 members did. My advice to you is to watch the movie, and listen to the songs that are being performed for the said flick. If you like the musical aspect, fine, if you like score music, there are some good ones, but please don't buy this album for the Crow song.

Sublime
Second Hand Smoke
(Universal)

Uh, isn't the lead guy, like, dead? What album is this? Well, to understand the outlook that one could take on the commercialization of 'greatest hits' packs, check out Soundgarden's *A-Sides* review and it will all become clearer. The only difference here is that Sublime uses this compilation with a little more smarts and a hell of a lot more variety than their Seattle comrades. Some of the tracks here are remixes and others are songs that were not present on previous albums. That's great in itself, but the fact is that this is another attempt to capitalize on the death of an artist. If you are willing to take that into consideration upon purchasing this disc, then fine. The songs are strong and the remixes range from weak to very good, so the content is certainly not lacking. It is interesting to see how short this group was around in the limelight and how many people have commented that with the death of this band came the beginning of the end of the genre of ska. Not a unique parallel to Soundgarden at all.

Soundgarden
A-Sides
(A&M)

It may be an overstatement to say that last year's Soundgarden break-up marked the 'end of grunge.' The fact is, by 1997, the genre of loud fast rules and lo-fi metal/pop had already taken a backseat to techno/rave and traditional pop/rock. Indeed, it would appear that Soundgarden parted the scene at the best time, taking a bow that left them in the good graces of the media and critics and longed for by their fans. However, while the last three of their five studio albums certainly portray this Seattle band as a legitimate rock band of noteworthy attributes, the release of *A-Sides* reveals a commercialism that leaves a bad taste in the mouth. In essence, this new album is a compilation of Soundgarden's hits (!!!) like "Jesus Christ Pose," "Black Hole Sun," and "Pretty Noose." Great for people who have none of their releases, and just want another record to add to their useless collection, this recording is a head scratcher for fans. It wasn't difficult to follow their career and pick up their five albums, but to get a rarities, b-sides or live concert disc would have been far more rewarding. This is just another album that Soundgarden will make money off without putting an ounce of effort into it. C'mon. It was a no-brainer to include "Fell On Black Days" and "Rusty Cage" it would have been far better to choose songs that never made it to disc, or those that were recorded live in some shithole in Mobile, Alabama.

- Matt Hennessey



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