

x.raves
by S. Livingstone

These reviews were supposed to be presented late last semester, but because I, admittedly a hopeless slacker, lost them (they were on another disk), you will just have to consider it New Year's reading material rather than wish list ideas.

**Perfect Teeth
Unrest
(4AD/teenbeat)**

This album by a little known American group is, well, very cool, and one realizes this with the first glance at the packaging and booklet. The album title, although interesting, is not explained by the lyrics or the booklet, so one must assume that the members all have beautiful smiles. The songs are quite minimalist, with few audible instruments and the soft poetic

voices of the male and female lead vocalists. The music is very soothing and relaxing, to the point of inducing sleep, which is a positive attribute considering the tired, overworked student population searching for new music. (3.5)

**Phaseshifter
Redd Cross
(Polygram)**

Not to be confused with those teensta rappers, Kriss Kross, or ancient entertainer Redd Foxx, this American band founded by two brothers in their early teens is, without hesitation, amazing. That comment only stands if you can appreciate the likes of Halifax's Sloan and other mosh friendly bands. I suppose for those desperate to categorize Redd Kross under a heading, one could call it grunge, but that word is overused and general. This is just a great band with a

great album. Check out the video for "Jimmy's Fantasy" and decide. (4)

**Construction for the
Modern Idiot
The Wonderstuff
(Polygram)**

very quick review....loud, gritty, often amusing songs, each with a spoken word introduction. (3)

**Four Calendar Cafe
Cocteau Twins
(Polygram)**

Based in Britain, this well known group continues to give its listeners the sound of Elizabeth Fraser's beautiful voice, which reminds me of Sarah McLachlan, accompanied by haunting, melodic music. This album is wonderful music for those needing a soundtrack to their lives. The title is perfect - for whatever reason. (4)

**Envy
Eve's Plum
(Sony)**

Although not of the

grrrrl group genre, this band of one woman and three men, presents the anger and aggression of groups like L7 and Babes in Toyland, but with the friendliness of Belly. Many of the songs are quite aggressive such as "blue", but then there is also "die like someone", a more peaceful song. The lead's raspy voice is amazing, as is her delivery of the lyrics. This New York based band may prove itself to be more than an underground sensation in the months to come. (4)

**Very
Pet Shop Boys
(EMI)**

The latest album from the English duo is contained in a bright orange jewel box that will look very out-of-place among your collection of conventionally packaged cd's. If you like the Pet Shop Boys, you are sure to like this new album, but if you find that their older work

drove you to the brink of insanity, then this release will hold no surprises. They have not changed, but that is why the Pet Shop Boys have such a large following. It is as though they can be trusted to create perfect europop, with a techno-like beat here and there, the entire time making fun of the British music industry. The last song on the disc is a remake of the Village People's "Go West", complete with a choir. Very cool. (4)

**Zoo Rave II
various artists
(BMG)**

I recall granting Zoo Rave I a perfect score, and with this, the second volume of techno sounds, I feel the same way. This album contains the group Bleu from the first album, and a Canadian group new to the scene, Texas Audio. The selections on this compilation are certainly some of the best and are sure to make you want to hit the clubs - too bad one couldn't hear this

music in Charlottetown. I haven't seen this cd at local music stores, so this review may not be the advertising BMG is looking for. If you can find the cd, though, and a few chemical substances, you will be in ecstasy. (5)

**Sounds Over Europe
various artists
(BMG)**

Another compilation album from the dancing queens at BMG. This album may actually have a greater chance than Zoo Rave for finding fans because it presents more accessible, progressive house music than techno. Most of the selections are very danceable (Julie tested them during a dance break - Alana choreographed the event), especially Hysterie's "Midnight Hour" and The Time Frequency's "The Ultimate High," with the powerful voices reminiscent of Martha Wash from Black Box. (4)

**Cyber Chords &
Sushi Stories
Plan B
(BMG)**

They should have stuck with plan A. This album sucks! (0)

**Bigger, Better,
Faster, More!
4 Non Blondes
(Interscope)**

You are sure to have seen one of the videos from this debut album on MuchMusic as heavy rotation is in effect. This group, which seemingly surfaced out of nowhere during the summer, has been giving the mainstays on the charts a definite challenge. Their first release, "What's Up", proved this group to be on the way to fame, demonstrating the lead vocalist's remarkable, and super-powerful voice. Her raspy sound on the newest release, "Superfly," is very impressive, and may remind one of Johnette Napolitano of Concrete Blonde. The lyrics point to the problems of the world, but are not sugarcoated in political correctness, and speak of getting high, but in a more natural manner than back alley injections. Have a listen. You will not be disappointed. (4.5)

Counterparts

**Rush
(Anthem)**

For well over twenty years, one of the better bands in our crisis-ridden nation has been Rush. With their philosophical/ethical lyrics and one of the few lead bass guitars in the music industry, one can usually count on them for a listenable album.

Into this set-up rides *Counterparts*. Like most Rush albums, it has an underlying theme tying the songs together (in this case, the duality of man; you know, woman or man, good or evil, that sort of thing). And like most Rush albums, it pounds you over the head with said moral. If you miss the point, you're listening to the karaoke version.

But the distinct Rush sound is still there, albeit a bit subdued. After more than twenty albums, the edge has dulled a bit. But still, this album is a minor improvement over 1991's *Roll The Bones*. If you're a Rush fan (and they're born, not made) you'll like this album. If you're not, but would like to be, pick up *The Rush Chronicals*, a two disc (or tape) collection which contains many of their best older tunes; you might also look out for their three best albums, *Power Windows*, *Moving Pictures*, and *Grace Under Pressure* (or was it Grace under fire? Under water? It's been a long time folks... sorry if I messed up on the name). (3.5)

-Trent Drake

**Crazy Eggs
Look People
A+M/Hypnotic**

Up until the release of this album, the Look People were a band I liked. They reminded me of They Might Be Giants, but with more instruments. This album does not remind me of Giants. It does not remind me of the Look People. Instead, it's a series of neat sound effects played without adherence to the principles of melody. The only songs on this tape that even resemble tunes are "Start/Stop" and "Talkin' Gibberish". Still, not bad for retro psychedelic acid music.

In the words of Mr. Horse: "Well sir,....I didn't like it. (2.5)

-Trent Drake

**October Project
October Project
(Sony)**

I sat through this CD a few times, but I still can't remember any of the tunes or words. I did enjoy it as background music; it was mellow yet fun enough to keep me awake. If you want a break from overly political bands, and want simply enjoyable music, give this self-titled CD a try.

-Aldera Chisholm