



THE ATARIS

End Is Forever

Kung Fu Records

The latest effort from this California based pop-punk quartet is as enjoyable as their last album. Despite being more mature, lyrical and musically, they haven't lost their distinct style of delivering emotional love songs that people can actually relate to. Almost every song is romantic but they are also very realistic and humorous. The best part about their songs are how they incorporate cool things in their lyrics, like references to *The Karate Kid* and Kevin Smith movies, as well as many others.

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GRAMMY NOMINEES 2001:

RAP/R&B

Various Artists

EMI

Well if the Grammys didn't suck enough this year, you can still get some more suck out of their R&B/Rap Nominees 2001 album. For the past couple of years there was simply the Grammys rap CD, then there was the Latino Grammy deal. And of course there is the normal just-Grammys version every year. The worst part about this compilation is that chances are, if you are a rap and/or R&B fan, then you probably already own most of these songs and are quite sick of

some of them. If you are not a fan, then why would you buy it? Making matters worse is that some of the songs nominated don't appear on the album and are listed as unavailable.

-Jmama

CHRIS SHEPPARD

Chris Sheppard's Club Cutz 404

BMG

If you are a fan of dance music then you might want to check this out. It includes some of the bigger club hits as well as different dance mixes of mainstream hits such as "Southside" by Moby and "There You Go" by Pink. If you are not someone who frequents clubs, you might want to keep your distance.

-Jmama

PIP SKID

Friends4Ever

Peanuts and Corn Records

Pip Skid uses hip hop to creatively vent his anger and express his concern for various issues. *Friends4Ever* is his attack on ignorance, exploitation and superficiality in our culture. He violently battles the various demons of society in his rhymes. The aggressive tone of this album is unsettling, but it is difficult to not get upset over issues like racism, sexism, and poverty. Pip is mad at the lack of discourse on these subjects in our culture, so he raises these issues in a way that is impossible to ignore.

We will never get rid of the exploitation of women, minorities, and the working class until we start thinking about our own involvement in these problems. Listeners of this album cannot avoid seriously reflecting on how their own actions fit into the problems in society. It is easy to distance our-

selves from an issue like racism, but Pip explores how things we take for granted in our own lives, like Bruce Willis movies, contribute to a culture that tolerates racism. In his insightful liner notes, Pip says, "Racism goes deeper than any of us can fathom. Those stickers that say 'Stop Racism' are a slap in the face. Like it's that simple."

Pip's method for bringing up these issues is anything but simple. He seems to be questioning his own beliefs and arguments with a dark sense of humour by exaggerating his anger and paranoia. In a song like "Gun Lobby," it is hard to conclude whether he is criticizing the government for having too much control, or militias for being paranoid. Either way, he raises important arguments for listeners to think about.

"Raggedy Anne," is the most powerful track on this album. It tells the true story of a woman who narrowly escaped a rapist disguised in a Raggedy Anne mask. Pip links this rape scenario to how all women must feel threatened in a "culture that celebrates sexism in rich tradition." His plea to "clean this misogynous mess that keeps women in fear," is a challenge to males to police themselves, and respect women as human beings, instead of as objects for their pleasure.

Helping him educate and entertain are several guest appear-

ances by an impressive selection of underground hip hop artists from across Canada. Recyclone does some "realistic war sounds" on "Gun Lobby," condemns *Maxim* magazine for being racist, sexist pornography in "True Blue," and joins Kunga219, Gruf the Druid, Shazzam and Knowself in the anti-action movie collaboration, "Long Live Bruce Willis." McEnroe drops a few vocals in "Life Is Too Easy Pt II" and "Dish Pig" while providing all of the beats and samples for the album that compliment Pip's style perfectly. Halifax's Scratch Bastard and Gordski from the Goods and Druncness Monster add some dope scratches over McEnroe's beats. Gumshow Strut rhymes with Pip about the hazing rituals of jocks in "Towel Snap." Epic adds his unique nervous rap style to "All Up In This Piece." John Smith mocks the excessiveness of hip hop culture with Pip in "Crantinis at 15,000 ft." Unleavend's spoken word contribution to "Varycloseveins" is a relaxing contrast to the intensity of Pip's style.

The collaborations are excellent, and the assortment of styles from all the artists add many flavours to this album. But Pip Skid's talent, intelligence, and twisted sense of humor are the pamper tape that hold everything together.

