

ARTS

& Entertainment

Plaid Tongued Devils
In Klezskavania
(Independent)

The obvious question that had to be asked when listening to this CD was "is the world ready for a gypsy-rock opera?" I can't honestly say, but for those with a taste for the offbeat, this disc is worth the effort. In this funny and highly entertaining effort, the Devils, a Calgary-based quintet, tell the story of Vladimir, a deformed violinist in the fictional nation of Klezskavania, and his quest for revenge against the evil financier Baron Leo Von Tantamount, who murdered his family and left poor ol' Vlad deformed. Vlad enlists the help of friend Lucy in his crusade, and with a special guest appearance by Satan himself, you know you're in for a few laughs. The music can best be described as "street buskers go to Greece", with plenty of wild violin riffs mixed in with lots of shouting and energy thrown in. Songs like "Whiner" and "never drown a cat" make you want to do cossack squats in your living room and shout "hey!" until the neighbors call the cops. According to the liner notes, *In Klezskavania* is a full-fledged stage play as well as a CD, and I for one am hoping for a tour.

3.7/5
-RW



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Ronnie Wood
Slide On Live
(BMG)

I was expecting so much more from this disc. Imagine, if you will: a member of the Rolling Stones records a solo effort of blues songs, recorded live in front of a rabid club audience. Should be a sure thing, right? Wrong. The word that stuck in my mind more than any other while listening to this CD was "boring." There was nothing remarkable about it at all - the solos are uninspired, the vocals are poor (Ron Wood sounds like he's swallowed a box of razor blades sideways), and the songs themselves are uninteresting and similar-sounding. Tracks "Josephine" and "Stay With Me" (one of several versions of songs Wood previously performed with his old band Faces) are enough to get your toes tapping, but the rest of the album falls flat. *Slide On Live* could be listenable under the right atmospheric conditions (at midnight when you're shooting pool and working on your fifth beer), but would only be of interest to die-hard Stones fans.

2.5/5
-RW

The Inbreds
Winning Hearts
(murderecords)

If you don't love this album, you should die.

ECMA nominees Mike O'Neil and Dave Ulrich (bass and drums, respectively) deliver enough swoon-factor on the 13 tracks that make up *Winning Hearts* to easily pop their way among the top albums of the year. The year may be young, but the earnestness of this record promises enough staying power that the disc will eventually find itself melted in your player, and all over your sentimental pieces. But make no mistake. This is not a long playing recording of schmaltz and waltz, but an exploration of feelingness, of loss and teamwork and goodbyes. The purity of the duo (still exploring the virtue of not being bogged down with unnecessary guitar noodling), lies in their keen pop sensibilities, their hummable melodies and the I-can-relate lyricism. The Inbreds prove with this work that nothing has to be sacrificed in transition from stage to studio, or vice-versa. The melancholy, if a little uplifting, "Sometimes" works with minimalism and balances the rock-out flavour of "Get Along." The first single, "Attitude," is bound to win hearts itself, with the video to be directed by Sloan's Chris Murphy.

This will be the album everyone will be talking about when Mike and Dave make it to the bigness they deserve.

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