

Choice Cuts

Reviews of Everything



Julie Doiron with Eric's Trip at the Marquee.

Show: Eric's Trip

Location: The Marquee - Halifax, NS

Date: September 8, 2001

The 90s seem so far away. People already wax nostalgic about the different attitude people had in that era: most notably, the adventurous musicians and artists that paved the way for so many garage and alternative acts. Eric's Trip played a major role in influencing lo-fi recording artists. The band, which broke up in 1996, made Halifax's Marquee one of their final stops in a much anticipated reunion tour. I think it is safe to say that Eric's Trip is the ONLY good thing to come out of Moncton. And their talent more than makes up for their city's lack of anything good. Perhaps coming from such an isolated city is what contributes to the band's modest stage presence. I was near the stage for the entire show, but I could not hear a single word of mumbled banter between songs. It probably didn't help that whenever Juno Award winning artist Julie Doiron would begin to say something, her bandmates would hammer away intolerably loud distorted notes. The interruptions had nothing to do with etiquette:

Since the band hasn't played together in five years, and refused to rehearse or do soundchecks, they were still trying to remember some of the songs on the spot. This attitude adds to the spontaneity and excitement of the show. The songs could fall apart at any moment, but the throbbing distortion from the amplifiers and the audience's love of their music held everything together. I can still hear the buzzing sound of Chris Thompson's guitar before it broke after the second song, Julie Doiron's bopping fuzzy bass lines and her buried vocals, not to mention the waves of melodic frequencies from Rick White, will be ringing in my ear for weeks after that night in Halifax. I think there was a drummer too.

-Stephan MACLEOD

Album: *Brace 4 Impak*

Artist: Da Beat Minerz

Label: Rawkus

Da Beat Minerz known for their work with the Boot Camp Click come through with their own album. Boot Camp has a presence here with Black Moon and Coco Brovas appearing on

one track each, but for the most part they expand to work with other rap artists. There are a fair number of rap stars present and accounted for, as well as some lesser known performers such as Apani B. Fly and What What, whose "Shut the Fuck Up" is easily one of the album's best songs. Two tight songs come courtesy of Jayo Felony and Ras Kass and Naughty by Nature. The one track that stands out most is the soulful "Open" by Caron Wheeler and Pete Rock. If you are a fan of the Minerz past work, this will not disappoint.

-Marc MACDONALD

¿Por Qué No?

Port Citizen

Independent

Port Citizen combine technical precision with catchy songwriting for this impressive debut of the band's rock and reggae flavour. The vibe of this album conjures up images of summertime somewhere between downtown Charlottetown and sunny Costa Rica. My only complaint about the disc is the unnecessary use of effects on Brodie Read's vocals. The only song that does not resort to using reverb or distortion on his voice, "Money in My Pocket," proves that microphone trickery is not needed. Port Citizen maintain a consistently tight package of music that will dazzle you with their efficiency and keep you dancing with their surprisingly funky arrangements.

-Stephan MACLEOD

Soundtrack: *Training Day*

Artist: Various

Label: Priority/Virgin

Nowadays one does not expect much from movie soundtracks, as many are often disappointing collections of uninspiring big-name collaborations

and leftover album filler. This is not the case here. There are some sore points coming from C-Murder and Trick Daddy's "Watch the Police," a horrible cover of the N.W.A. classic "Fuck the Police," as well as the pathetic "P-Diddy" and fam's "American Dream". However there is also some real highlights. Krumbsnatcha and M.O.P., Golden State featuring Xzibit, Dr. Dre and DJ Quik, and Gang Starr all provide some strong material. The two most outstanding tracks come from Pharoahe Monch and Cypress Hill featuring Kokane. The album works because it uses subject matter from the movie in the rhymes and places movie samples into the beginning of some songs and within the body of others, as well as combining elements of the soundtrack with film score.

-Marc MACDONALD

Album: *Hello Bastards*

Artist: Lifetime

Label: Jade Tree

While this album didn't strike me at first, after very few listens it has quickly become one of the most overplayed albums in my collection. Blame it on sentimentality perhaps, because this is chock-full of it (come on, *The Outsiders* samples... "Can you see the sun set from the south side?" "Yeah, real good." Come on! Fuck yeah.). Musically, this sounds like a cross between Crimpshrine and old Saves the Day, inasmuch that it consists of catchy, slightly emo-poppy punk, fronted by some gravel-throated Jerseyite, who can't sing but can be forgiven for trying. I'm sure some people will be irritated by the vocals, and they should probably stick to Saves the Day for this type of music, but I find this album to be rather charming and sincere for its lack of polish.

-Jonah CAMPBELL