

The Killdares  
*Broken With A Word*  
(Independent)

This is the self-released debut from the Killdares, an "alternative Celtic rock" band from Dallas, Texas. Members of the band are Tim Smith (lead vocals, drums), Linda Ralph (fiddle), Wes Lorber (guitars), and Ed Walewski

(bass, bouzouki, mandolin). *Broken With A Word* contains nine tracks of their traditional Celtic/hard rock hybrid. There are a couple of instrumental tracks on the album, showcasing Linda's smooth fiddling, which has resulted in her being named the California State Fiddle Champion four times. All but one of the nine tracks are original compositions.

The vocals are fine for the music, but it would be nice to hear someone else's voice once in a while for a bit of variety. Regardless, this is a fine album, which shows why the band has shared the stage with such acts as Steeleye Span.

[www.killdares.com](http://www.killdares.com)

The Smugglers  
*Growing Up Smuggler — A Ten Year Anniversary Live Album*  
(Lookout!)

This is the latest from "British Columbia's Canadian Ambassadors of Rock'n'Roll." Based out of Vancouver, they have brought their brand of fun and energetic punk all over the world, including a 1993 stop at the UPEI Barn. To

celebrate their tenth anniversary as a band, the Smugglers decided to release a live album that was recorded in Madrid, Spain.

This album is packed with 21 gems, including "Especially You," "She Ain't No Egyptian," "Rock'n'Roll Was Never This Fun," and my personal fave, "Alan Thicke" — an ode to the man who hosted their 1992 appearance on YTV. Included with this album is a

nine page booklet detailing the history of the band year by year (it even mentions their visit to the Barn!)

This is definitely one of the most enjoyable albums that I've hear all year — it makes me want to go to see a Smugglers concert. Fast, fun and catchy, what else can you ask for? Listen for the Smugglers on CIMN.

[www.lookoutrecords.com](http://www.lookoutrecords.com)

## BOOKS

*Uncle John's Indispensable Guide to the year 2000*  
The Bathroom Reader's Press  
(Raincoast Books)

For those of you that are familiar with the Bathroom Reader's Press, you will be extremely pleased with this special millennium edition. Not to be confused as just another one of those boring books about the upcoming millennium. This is an exciting book that I think does not fall under the category of "millennium mass hysteria" as seen in many similar books that are cashing in on the hype. This book explores the various ideas explored throughout human history. Some of the funny, sad, and amazing predictions were made in the 1890's and the early 1900's. An example of some of the predictions quoted in this book are as follows:

- *Mr. Berthelot, Strand Magazine, February 1901*: The businessman in 1999 [will take] a soup-pill or a concentrated meat-pill for his noon day lunch. His fair secretary [will] enjoy her office lunch in the same manner. Ice-cream pills [will be] very popular.
- *Glimpses of the future, Suggestions As to the Drift of Things (To be judged later in the year 2000), David Goodman Croly 1888. On Air Transportation*: Aerial navigation will solve the mystery of the poles, and eventually there will be no "dark region" on any of the continents...if the *aerostat* should become as cheap for travellers as the sailing vessel, why may not man become migratory, like the birds, occupying the mountainous regions and sea-coast in summer and more tropical climes in winter.

This book, however, is not totally dedicated to good and bad predictions. It also contains trivia, science, humour, history, pop culture, and entertainment. Overall, this is an amazing book that does not need to be read from the beginning to the end. It can be read at any point in the book and from any topic.

- Brody Morrison

1998

## a few good records...

While these may not constitute the only good albums of 1998, they are certainly notables that sound better than the bulk of the pap pressed by several major labels. This Big Ten (Plus) includes work ranging from the usual suspects (Sloan, Beck) to home-grown heroes (Strawberry), some decent straight-ahead pop and some new forays into new frontiers. This week's listing will look at some very good records that were introduced in 1998. The rest will come next week.

Belle & Sebastian  
*The Boy With The Arab Strap*  
(Jeepster/Matador)

A cult favourite in the UK, Belle & Sebastian is a band whose latest record offers a blend of soft and gentle, well-written songs. This album is thick, lush melodies delivered by the eight members of the band. The lead track, "It Could Have Been a Brilliant Career," begins with the wonderful line, "He had a stroke at the age of 24/could have been a brilliant career." This first song sets the stage for the mellow meanderings of this brilliantly musical release, and the atmosphere is maintained well throughout. Pure and beautiful, just beyond the clouds.

North of America  
*Elements of an Incomplete Map*  
(Matlock Records)

A hybrid of folks from the State Champs and the Motes, North of America explores the atonal pastures that typical Halifax pop neglects. *Elements...* is the band's first full-length release, and has mapped a promising road ahead. Aggressive and by-times experimental in their choices of arrangements, North of America is at their best with interesting fills and angry yelling everywhere.

PJ Harvey  
*Is This Desire?*  
(Island)

Polly Jean Harvey sings. Another splendid recording of her amazing range and emotive voice, *Is This Desire?* revisits many of the themes prominent in her previous works, such as loss, abuse, and love going on wrong. The characters in her songs -- both male and female -- come quite alive in her narratives as in a film. This release shows a more electronic influence, but is used sparingly to add a new dimension to the main instrument -- her voice. Another brilliantly haunting offering. Addictive.

The Inbreds  
*Winning Hearts*  
(PF/murderecords/Universal)

Halifax's favourite drum and bass duo is no more, but their

•Continued on page 12