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Saves

**Volume 15
Issue 3
December 2004**

**CLUB LISTINGS
RESTAURANTS
CONCERT INFO
BAND LISTINGS
REVIEWS
& MORE**

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With**

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Thurs. 9th

SANITY CHEQUE

Fri. 10th

WICKED PEACH

Sat. 11th - **33Hz**

Thurs. 16th

JOHN VALBY

Fri. 17th

HARD KNOXX

Sat. 18th

BAD FISH

Fri. 31st

INNEUNDO

Thurs. Jan. 6th

TIME BETWEEN US

Fri. Jan. 7th - **KICK**

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SATURDAY DEC. 18th



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INSIDE THE WAVE

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Cover & Story Photo by
James R. Minchin III

MAILBAG



Dear Sound Waves,

We're new residents in this area (Mystic). As live music seekers, we find Sound Waves very useful. Great interviews, too.

But we think you'd do well to stay editorially focused on the music business and to avoid the tempting urge to use your rather tall, sturdy soapbox to express your political views or, in fact, any other subject matter not directly related to the mission of Sound Waves. You even admit in the current issue that your political enthusiasm last month made you forget to mention that, as of the 10/04 issue, Sound Waves had entered its 15th year of publication.

Congratulations on your recent milestone and, as always, we're looking forward to the next issue of Sound Waves.

Regards,
Carl Randall

Thanks for your input Carl, and welcome to Mystic. These past few months was the first time Sound Waves had done anything political. Through the years I felt this publication should only deal with music. But because of our current politicians, I have seen the many entertainment venues in our area fall on hard times. These venues and their advertising is what keeps Sound Waves a free publication. Soon there is a trickle down effect. Sound Waves, Bands and so on.

Being the elections are over, I'll keep my opinions in the Rant column. I do try and add some humor to the column though.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday
David L. Pottie - Editor/Publisher

4 SOUND WAVES

DON'T
TURN
CHRISTMAS
EVE
INTO
CHRISTMAS
MOURNING



Designate A Driver

**If Your Holiday plans
include alcohol,
pleasedesignate a driver
before the party begins.**

MADD
Mothers Against Drunk Driving



Sound Waves

December 2004
VOLUME 15, NUMBER 3

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RANT OF THE MONTH

MARRIAGE part 2

Last month's column had some great responses. So I decided to carry the rant onto this month and post some of the other quotes from the Bible. I wonder if GWB ever gets letters like this.

Dear President Bush,

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from you and understand why you would propose a constitutional amendment ban same sex marriage. As you said "in the eyes of God marriage is based between a man a woman." I try to share your knowledge with as many people as I can. When someone tries to defend the homosexual relationships, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly states it to be an abomination. End of debate.

I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some other elements of God's Laws and how to follow them.

1. Leviticus 25:44 states that I may possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighboring nations. A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify? Why can't I own Canadians?

2. I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?

3. I have a neighbor who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2. clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself, or should I ask the police to do it?

4. A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is an abomination - Lev. 11:10, it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. Can you settle this? Are there 'degrees' of abomination?

5. Lev.21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some wiggle-room here?

6. Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Lev. 19:27. How should they die?

7. I know from Lev. 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?

8. My uncle has a farm. He violates Lev.19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? Lev.24:10-16. Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair, like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Lev.20:14)

I know you have studied these things extensively and thus enjoy considerable expertise in such matters, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

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MUSIC NOTES

By Mark T. Gould

"Hey, Santa Baby!! Some Music That Would Be Great For Your Holiday"

So little space. So many great albums and musical DVDs out there.

That's the conundrum for an intrepid reviewer, given the vast amount of music that comes out every year, and the relatively limited amount of space in which to praise its virtues.

So, in the spirit of the holiday gift-giving season, here are some of the great releases of the past few months, which you, and I, might have missed:

Michael Jackson: The Ultimate Collection (Epic) is an absolute grab fest for Jacko fans. Four full length compact discs, with remastered music spanning his entire career, from his days in the Jackson Five to his most recent work, with a couple of unreleased demos, including "We Are the World," thrown in for good measure. If that isn't enough, there's a DVD concert video from the "Dangerous" Tour in Bucharest. **Neko Case: The Tigers Have Spoken (Anti)** is one heck of a challenging career decision, a live album of inspired covers which, in her extremely talented hands, works in bunches. A rare example of an artist not following a traditional path, and, as a result, giving us one of the truly great, challenging releases of the year. **Michael McDonald: Motown Two (Motown)** continues his exploration of the Detroit sound, in the footsteps of the first volume. McDonald's soulful voice, which hasn't lost a thing, is the perfect vehicle for these treasures. **Bobby Darin: Aces Back to Back! (Hyena)** showcases perhaps one of the most underrated singers and entertainers of the 20th century, with a grouping of live tracks and a marvelous DVD of segments from his 70s variety show. **Anita Baker: My Everything (Blue Note)** is, amazingly, her first album in 10 years, and spotlights everything we've missed from this sultry siren's mix of R&B, jazz and standards. **Rolling Stones: Rock and Roll Circus (ABKCO-DVD)** is the best sounding release yet of this long buried but recently released classic of the Stones at the top of their musical game, accompanied by John Lennon, the Who and Taj Mahal. A bundle of extra goodies make this release top-notch. **Blasters: 4-11-44 (Evangeline)** is an import release of the current Blasters' lineup of original members Phil Alvin and John Bazz, along with drummer Jerry Angel and guitarist Keith Wyatt, with a ton of joy of the impressive roots music that makes them one of the special bands around. **Enjoy Every Sandwich: The Songs of Warren Zevon (Artemis)** is a fitting tribute to the late, great singer-songwriter, with rare live performances of "My Rides Here," from Bruce Springsteen, and "Mutineer," from none other than Bob Dylan, along with beautiful studio versions of Zevon classics from Don Henley, Jordan Zevon, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Steve Earle and others. **Nancy Sinatra & Lee Hazelwood: Nancy & Lee 3 (WEA**

Intenational) is the third collaboration, and the first in over three decades, from two distinctive singers and interpreters whose work remains stellar even after so many years. **Nancy Sinatra (Sanctuary)** is her first solo album in too many years, and includes strongly performed duets with Morrissey, Bono and the Edge, Jon Spencer and others, in a contemporary setting that works wonders. **Burrito Deluxe: The Whole Enchilada (Luna Chica)** the second release from the latter day band consisting of Sneaky Pete Kleinow, Garth Hudson Rick Lonow, Carlton Moody and Jeff Davis. It's a very strong performance, highlighted by a great cover of "The Letter." **Percy Sledge: Shining Through The Rain (Varese)** proof positive that the passionate singing of this velvety vocalist has not dimmed the slightest since the hey day of "When a Man Loves a Woman." Singers half Sledge's age should sing so well and so strongly. **Clash: London Calling 25th Anniversary Legacy Edition (Epic)** is a combination double CD/DVD of arguably the most important album of the punk era, by easily its most talented and crucial band. The bonus CD of demos and rehearsals of these seminal songs and the roughhousing on the DVD are a perfect compliment to this amazing album. **Santana: Legacy Edition and Johnny Winter: Second Winter Legacy Edition (Columbia/Legacy)** showcase the power of two of the most influential guitarists of the late Sixties. The bonus studio and live material on each release are worth the price of admission in themselves. **John Kay: Heretics & Privateers (Rainman)** is a blues album from the longtime Steppenwolf leader, in which his trademark vocal prowess remains a highlight, pushing these songs beyond what you might expect from him in this genre. A truly surprising delight of a record. **Buddy Miller: Universal United House of Prayer (New West)** is a acoustic gem of spiritual songs from this most talented writer and performer, with songs co-written with his wife Julie, Victoria Williams, Jim Lauderdale and a ethereal cover of Dylan's "With God on Our Side." **John Mellencamp: Words & Music Greatest Hits (Island/UME)** is a two-disc collection spanning his entire career, from "I Need a Lover" and "Jack and Diane" to new, unreleased tracks that continue his important, critical view of our conditions and our times. **Herbie Hancock: "The Piano" and "VSOP: Live Under the Sky" (Columbia/Legacy Jazz)** include three discs of the pianist and bandleader's late 70s work, all of which was previously unreleased in the United States. "Piano" is as its sounds, a solo work, while "VSOP" is the reincarnation of the Miles Davis Quintet (Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter and Tony Williams, augmented by Freddie Hubbard on trumpet) on its triumphant Japan tour in 1979. **Brewer & Shipley: Weeds & Tarkio (Collectors Choice)** are remastered reminders of much headier, cloudier time, complete with acoustic guitars, great harmonies and terrific songs. **Hard-Headed Woman: A Celebration of Wanda Jackson (Bloodshot)** is everything the name implies, a smorgasbord of great interpretations of one of the greatest, yet most underrated, singers of the rock era, clearly entitled to be called the Queen of Rockabilly. Performers

CONTINUED PAGE 14

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CONCERT DATES

ANI DIFRANCO

4 - Lupo's, Providence, RI

BETTER THAN EZRA

3 - Lupo's, Providence, RI

BR549

19 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

CHERYL WHEELER

3 - Wilde Auditorium, Hartford, CT

CHRIS ISAAK

18 - Foxwoods Casino, Mashantucket, CT

CLAY AIKEN

3 - P.A.C., Providence, RI

10 - Oakdale Theatre, Wallingford, CT

COLLECTIVE SOUL

7 - Toad's Place, New Haven, CT

DAN BERN

4 - Lupo's, Providence, RI

DARK STAR ORCHESTRA

11 - The Palladium, Worcester, MA

15 - Lupo's, Providence, RI

16 - Toad's Place, New Haven, CT

THE DUKE ROBILLARD BAND

4 - Black-Eyed Sally's, Hartford, CT

17 - Chan's, Woonsocket, RI

FLO & EDDIE

5 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

KIM SIMMONDS

9 - Chan's, Woonsocket, RI

GODSMACK

4 - P.A.C., Providence, RI

12 - Oakdale Theatre, Wallingford, CT

LOS STRAITJACKETS

9 - The Call, Providence, RI

MINISTRY

4 - Toad's Place, New Haven, CT

RONNIE SPECTOR

25 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

SPYRO GYRA

17 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA

29 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

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4th

MUNSELL BROTHERS
BAND

11th - FACE FIRST
& GUEST

18th

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MUSIC NEWS BITS

Finger-picking acoustic guitarist **Dan Stevens**, resident of Old Lyme, CT was the winner of the **Connecticut Blues Society's 1st CT Acoustic Blues Challenge** at the **Hungry Tiger Café** in Manchester, CT Sunday night, November 14th. Over seventy enthusiastic Blues music fans witnessed five performers, which included **Joel Blumert**, **Chris D'Amato**, **JSwine**, **D.C. Jones**, and Stevens. A panel of six judges, including musicians, Blues music radio DJs, and Blues fans, awarded each participant a score of one to ten in the categories of Talent, Blues Content, Originality, Showmanship and Overall Impression. These criteria are used at The Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge (IBC). Stevens will be Connecticut's representative to participate in the **Acoustic Division of the International Blues Challenge**, sponsored by the Blues Foundation in Memphis on February 4, 2005. Stevens will be awarded a \$400.00 cash prize to offset travel costs to the event. Artists must be an official representative of a Blues Foundation-sanctioned blues society to compete in the International Blues Challenge, which enters its 21st year in 2005 as the nation's biggest and most respected showcase for "undiscovered" blues talent. **Larry Garner**, **Tommy Castro**, **Susan Tedeschi**, **Michael Burks**, **Michelle Wilson**, **Albert Cummings** and **Sean Costello** have all gained national recognition through the IBC. Having an opportunity to showcase their music at the annual Blues Challenge provides local blues musicians with the impetus they need to stay at the top of their game and fulfills the non-profit Connecticut Blues Society's mission of promoting and preserving the Blues as a unique art form in Connecticut. "I was thrilled to have been chosen from a field of five very talented artists to carry the torch for the Connecticut Blues Society in Memphis this year", says Stevens. "It is a great opportunity for me to gain exposure and to meet others in the industry. I am very much looking forward to it". Stevens studied the traditional Delta finger-picking blues style under **Paul Rishell** and **Dave Van Ronk**. In the past Summer, among many other shows, he appeared at the Berlin (CT) Blues Festival, the Riverhead (NY) Blues Festival, and in Albany's Fleet Blues Festival. He travels the East Coast from Maine to North Carolina, and he has played in Germany and England. Steven's most recent self-produced CD is *"Broke Down and Hungry"*.



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8 OPEN	9 D J	10 KARAOKE	11 KARAOKE	12 O
15 OPEN	16 D J	17 KARAOKE	18 KARAOKE	19 T D
22 OPEN	23 D J	24 Merry Christmas!	25	26 B
29 OPEN	30 D J	31 We wish everyone a safe & happy New Year		A
				L
				L
				SUNDAYS FREE POOL!



DAN STEVENS

3 - Academy Coffeehouse, Cheshire, CT 8pm
 4 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI 8pm
 7 - Dolphin Striker, Portsmouth, NH
 8 - Hole In The Wall, N. Conway, NH
 10,11 - Suds Pub, Bethel, ME
 16,30 - Brewhouse, South Norwalk, CT 8pm
 17 - Maritime Grille, Guilford, CT 7pm
 18 - Sneekers Café, Groton, CT

EIGHT TO THE BAR

3 - Festival, Hartford, CT 7-11
 12 - Bon Vue, Narragansett, RI
 18 - Wolf Den, Uncasville, CT 11-1:30
 31 - First Night, Fall River, RI 7:30-11:45

FLESH HAMMER

17 - Plan B, Montville, CT

GOPHERBROKE

3 - Bistro, Westfield, MA 7-11
 4 - Billy Wilsons, Norwich, CT
 10 - Penalty Box, Coventry, CT
 11 - Sneekers, Ashford, CT
 17 - Bidwell Tavern, Coventry, CT
 18 - Oliver's Tavern, Essex, CT 7:30-11:30
 24 - Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, MA
 31 - Rathskellar, Southbury, CT

INNUENDO

31 - Stash's Cafe, New London, CT

KICK

3 - Red Door, Watertown, CT
 4 - Stash's, New London, CT
 10 - Geraldine's, W. Springfield, MA
 11 - The Thirsty Turtle, Stamford, CT
 17 - Murphy & Scarletti's, Farmington, CT
 18 - J.R.'s, Cranston, RI
 30 - Bourbon Street N., Hartford, CT

12 SOUND WAVES

MIKE SAVINO/THE SONS

16,23,30 - Oliver's Tavern, Essex, CT 8pm
 3 - Chowder Pot IV, Hartford, CT
 4,25 - The Black Seal, Essex, CT
 5 - Donovan's Reef, Branford, CT
 11 - JRoo's, North Haven, CT
 12 - Driftwood, Clinton, CT 5pm
 17 - The Trap, Groton, CT
 18 - Ivoryton Tavern, Ivoryton, CT

Ms. MARCI & THE LOVESICK HOUNDS

18 - C.C. O'Briens, Pawcatuck, CT

NEAR EMPTY BLACK

9 - Rain Desert, Danielson, CT

PETE SERGE

11 - Daily Grind Café, Willington, CT 7pm
 18 - Jitters, Southington, CT 8pm

SUGAR DADDY BAND

3 - Stash's Cafe, New London, CT
 10 - Burke's Tavern, New London, CT
 31 - Tongue & Groove, Mystic, CT

33Hz

11 - Stash's Cafe, New London, CT
 18 - Rick's Billiards, Putnam, CT

WICKED PEACH

10 - Stash's Café, New London, CT
 11 - Rookie's, Cromwell, CT
 17 - Burke's Tavern, Niantic, CT
 18 - The Eagle, Fall River, MA
 31 - Burke's Tavern, Niantic, CT

WORLD'S SMALLEST QUARTET

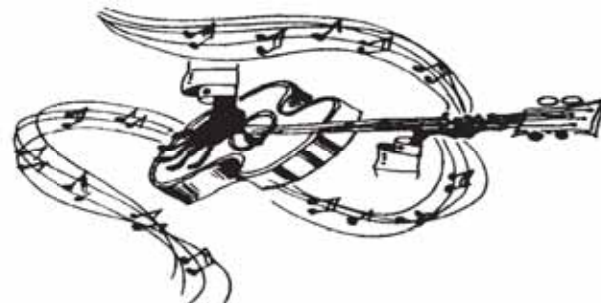
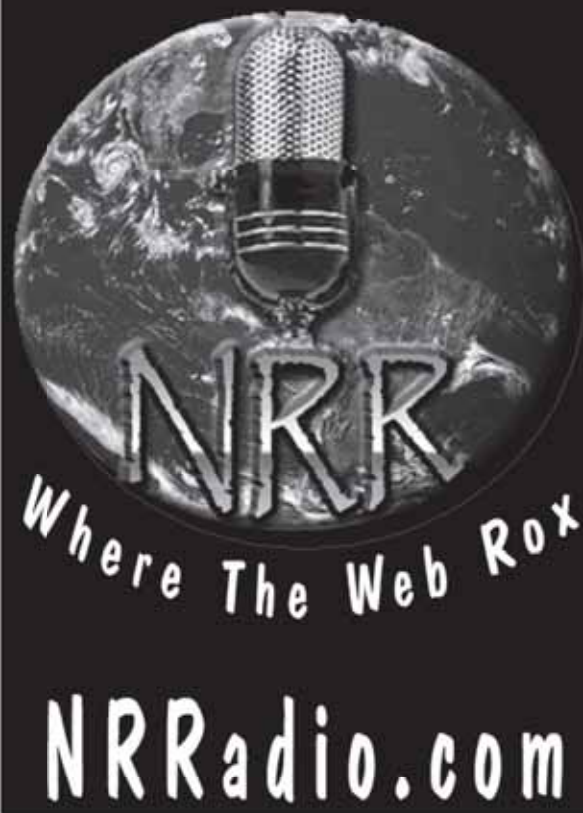
4 - Tedore's Restaurant, Wales, MA 8-12
 10 - Bidwell Tavern, Coventry, CT
 11 - Brewing Company, Willimantic, CT 10-1
 17 - Billy Wilson's, Norwich, CT
 18 - Village Restaurant, Woodstock, CT
 19 - Missing Bones, Ellington, CT 3-7
 31 - Merlin's, Oakdale, CT

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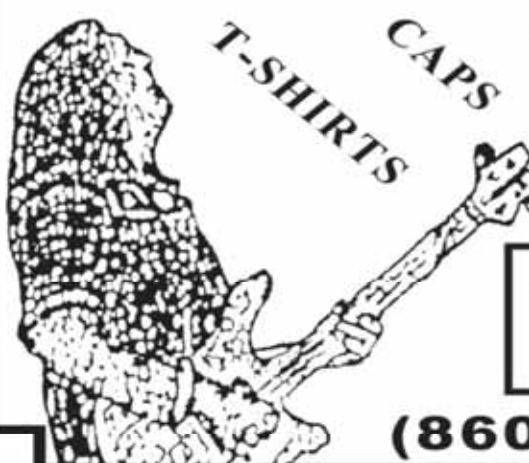
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include Neko Case, Laura Cantrell, Rosie Flores and many others who pay their debt of gratitude for their inspiration. **Beautiful Dreamer: The Songs of Stephen Foster (American Roots)** is a fitting tribute to perhaps America's greatest songwriter. Artists as diverse as Bob Dylan, Henry Kaiser and Mavis Staples showcase Foster's classics, as well as his lesser-known songs. **Dolly Parton: Hello, I'm Dolly (Sugar Hill)** reveals her depth of songwriting and performing, over more than four decades, that is sometimes diminished behind her strong persona and acting career. **Phil Collins: Love Songs (Rhino)** is a treasure of classic, rarities, unreleased tracks and live performances of the many songs that his listeners and fans have found so meaningful over the years. **Live Aid (Warner Strategic Marketing DVD)** is finally, after so long a wait, an incredible sounding and viewing recollection of the historic benefit concerts for African famine relief, held back in July 1985. **Joni Mitchell: Dreamland (Warner Strategic Marketing)** is a career-long retrospective spanning this incredible artist's folk, jazz and big band recording career. **Wayne Shorter: Footprints (Columbia Legacy Jazz)** collects, for the first time, a representative output of the entire career of one of the seminal jazz greats, from his early work with Art Blakey, through Miles Davis, Weather Report and his more recent solo work, with superb sound and Legacy's usually great liner notes.

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HEAR HER ROAR: AVRIL LAVIGNE



By Rex Rutkoski

This girl is a woman now.

Though Avril Lavigne just left her teen years in September, it would take considerably more than a chronological point of reference to leave her trademark do-it-my-way spirit behind. It's still very much in evidence in the first of her 20Something years.

That's a birthday present the Canadian artist continues to give to herself as she opens a new chapter of her life and career. The previous one (becoming, at 17, one of music's top-selling artists, selling 14 million copies of her 2002 debut CD, "Let Go," earning eight Grammy nominations) has proven to be an exciting "read" for her and fans worldwide who identified not just with her accessible rock but also its message of independence.

In another era, Australian pop singer Helen Reddy proudly proclaimed, "I Am Woman (Hear Me Roar)," in her Grammy-winning 1972 song.

Though stylistically in another musical world, and with an in-your-face attitude that Reddy probably would have blushed in attempting, Lavigne essentially is delivering the same proclamation for a new generation.

"It's been a pleasant surprise," she says, in classic understatement, as she looks back on her own road less traveled. "It's gone very well. I guess I never thought about what it would do, especially coming out with the first record."

"Let Go" was the third biggest-selling album of 2002, propelled by such singles as "Complicated."

She senses she is on to new adventures, she adds in a morning conversation from Belfast. "Yes, I definitely do. I'm starting my tour. I feel like I've stepped up a notch performing. I perform three songs on piano and three songs by myself on acoustic guitar in my shows," she explains.

And then there's her new album, "Under My Skin," which

as of September had already sold more than five million copies worldwide, in which she took charge in a significant way. "I took a lot more control," she says. It is work that she believes represents growth for her. That in part comes from the maturation process, heightened undoubtedly by the fishbowl existence which, for better or worse, seems to be the byproduct these days of such intriguing success.

Returning from her world tour, unbeknownst to her management or record label, she got together with Chantal Kreviazuk, her fellow Canadian singer-songwriter, and they co-wrote 12 songs. Lavigne moved into the California home shared by Kreviazuk and her producer-husband Raine Maida (of Our Lady Peace) and began recording.

The unaltered results comprise the bulk of "Under My Skin." The artist cut the remainder of the songs nearby, co-written with her guitarist Evan Taubenfeld, and one track with former Evanescence guitarist Ben Moody.

Lavigne speaks with pride of having been involved with every aspect of making this record – from the sound of the drums to the guitar tones. She admits to being "really picky" with her sound now that she understands the process so much better.

She insists it is not difficult to maintain control of her own career, even in these still early stages. "I work closely with my management. Everything goes through me. I'm very particular about everything," she says.

When others know that you know what you are doing, it is not hard to win respect she implies. "I might say, 'I don't like something that way.' They have learned very quickly," she says. "It didn't take very long," she adds, laughing. "They know I know what I want. Everything is awesome."

The view from inside the industry is decidedly different than when you are on the outside looking in, she suggests. "What you don't understand before you get into it is that you really put yourself out there," she explains. "The more popular you get the more people talk about you, even making things up. Some people are really judgmental."

No one really knows unless they are in it how harsh it can be, either, she says. "It's very harsh. And seeing how the business really works, some people really don't care about the music, business people. They care about other things."

You just have to be careful about who you work with, she says. "I've been really fortunate. I've got good people around me who care about me."

Lavigne, who in addition to her nomination for an American Music Award for "favorite female artist" in pop-rock also has received the World Music Award for "pop rock artist," believes people care about her music because it comes from personal experience.

"People can relate to that and I'm glad," she says. "I've got a lot of fan mail. People talk about why songs touched them. It's very rewarding to me," she adds.

She sees her new album as more serious in certain ways.

"Slipped Away" is a tribute to her grandfather who died while she was touring. She says it was the first death that she had experienced. "Together" explores the delicate territory of knowing when to admit to yourself that a relationship is not working. "Don't Tell Me" is what she calls her "girl power" song, a reminder to her female fans not to let themselves be pressured into intimacy if they don't feel it is right.

"Who Knows" and "Take Me Away" reflect welcome optimism.

Time Magazine praised Lavigne's "My Happy Ending," the second single off "Under My Skin," as one of 2004's "12 Songs of Summer." One reviewer called it a "mini-empowerment anthem."

Lavigne's music touches both youth and adults. It's not lost on her that she is viewed in some circles as a role model.

She appreciates that, she implies, but does not let that affect her. "It doesn't make me self conscious. I don't worry about my actions or what I say," she insists. "I'm a role model for what I've always been: a person outspoken about what's on my mind, being honest and real. I think that's a good thing."

She hopes younger girls learn from that. "I hope they see, 'She is herself and does what she wants and stands up for herself.' I think it's good for other people to be like that."

No mystery surrounds what motivates her. "It's fun," Lavigne says. "I'm on tour and this is a blast. I'm totally motivated. I love music, performing, playing my instrument, being on stage and trying to be the best I can. I'm hard on myself. After a show, I have all these notes. I ask myself, 'What can I do to make the show better.' I walk around with my notes and talk to the light man, the soundman and others. They say, 'Here she comes again,' but I can't help it though."

She has enjoyed her move to playing arenas. "I love it. Of course there are so many people. That's very exciting going, 'My gosh, all these people up here seeing me!' That's very cool."

It is more challenging trying to connect with an audience or getting the sound you want in larger venues, she acknowledges. "I just work harder doing that, connecting with them. I put as much into it as I can."

She is finding that European audiences react differently overall to her music.

"I don't know what it is, it's just kind of everyone is more like crazy. If you just walk out on the street they start screaming. And you have a million letters sent to you. In America you get that, but not as much. In Europe, they seem more excitable over here. Maybe it's because I'm not here very often."

Or maybe it's the all-encompassing girl/now-woman power of Avril Lavigne.

As Lavigne herself says, "Music is a very wonderful thing."



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HEARING AID

CROSSFADE

"Crossfade"

FG Records/Columbia
Records

Hailing from Columbia, South Carolina, Crossfade's debut and self-titled album is an overlapping of a heavy rhythm section with melodic vocals. If you enjoy music that often varies in pace and heaviness, then this is a terrific band for you. Crossfade's style is such that one second you'll be hearing a softly-strummed guitar part with a sweet vocal melody, and the next second that same guitar has heavy distortion and that same voice is rapping and yelling. This album is multi-layered and boasts a wide array of musical textures that offer something to fans of almost every music genre.

The first song, "Starless," smacks you in the face with hard and percussive guitars, only to calm into a soft, quiet stillness, and then return to the vigor with which it started. This pretty much sets the stage for the rest of the album. From punchy to pleasant, this album is similar to the styles of Nickelback and Puddle Of Mudd. However, this similarity does occasionally extend to a serious lack of originality. The vocal styles and clean guitar parts are very much like that of Nickelback, so much that on some songs it almost sounds indistinguishable. Despite this, most of the songs offer something a little unique with the addition of rapping and heavily overdriven guitars. This is most evident in "Death Trend Setta" which is mostly rapping and yelling over heavy breakdowns. This is definitely a harder, heavier sound than that of most bands falling in the Nickelback/Puddle Of Mudd genre. Through every melody, every guitar effect, there's still a strong and powerful sound. At the same time, the gritty, heavy parts of a Crossfade song never overpower the light and melodic, they compliment each other. Crossfade has done a great job of creating an ever-present balance on this record that adds tremendous depth to every song.

Though the musicianship on this record was something to be noted, the lyrics often were not. The music was deep and intricate, and the lyrics left much to be desired. With lines like "If only you could watch me fall, I cannot feel it anymore"

and "Where's the love for me these days? I'm goin' off the deep end" I felt that I was listening to something that had been done to death already. Even the better lyrics had problems. For example, the line "But you should know, these colors that you're shining are surely not the best" is changed to "Surely not the best, colors that you shine" to fit the chorus. It's a good line with a moving visual, but in repetition as a chorus it loses its meaning. It seems like the lyrics are just there to fill in the gaps, just to suit the music. I think that if lyricists in the band took a step back to just focus on lyrics, not making them fit the music, that they could have some really incredible results. This isn't to say that the vocals weren't good, they definitely were, I especially loved the harmony in the beginning of "So Far Away". With a small improvement upon the lyrics, the vocals on this album would have been absolutely amazing.

All in all this is a decent album. This isn't really my style of music, but it is good. It doesn't stand out against a lot of rock bands around, it isn't that innovative or different, but it is excellence in the style of music it adheres to and that's commendable. Even more commendable is the fact that this CD was recorded in the band's basement. I had to do a double take when I read this in the foldout because the sound quality and mixing is very professional. I highly recommend this album to fans of Nickelback or other bands in regular rotation on FNX or the like. This is truly a great rock release from a band poised at dominating the genre of music they play.

- Wyatt Shibley

FACES

"Five Guys Walk Into a Bar..."

Rhino

Looking back, heck, even when they were together, it was, and has, always been a knee-jerk reaction to refer to the Faces as simply a drunken bar band. Now, thanks to this incredible four-disc long collection of studio, live, one-off, rehearsal and just playing doodling around tracks, lovingly nurtured by keyboardist Ian McLagan, the evidence is overwhelming that this great, underrated band left much more than their own collective hangover on popular music.

While the exquisite liner notes with this release makes it clear from the band mem-

bers that their partying certainly did create somewhat of a sloppy atmosphere in which to create lasting music, it is nonetheless clear that the Faces, singer Rod Stewart, guitarist Ronnie Wood, drummer Kenney Jones and bassist Ronnie Lane, in addition to McLagan, produced some sterling sides, all of which, and more, are included herein.

Following half a decade after their single-disc "hits" (as it were) collection, "Good Boys...When They're Asleep," this boxed set, which includes their most popular tracks such as "Stay With Me," "Miss Judy's Farm," and their cover of "Maybe I'm Amazed," also, dramatically and with no malice aforethought, includes enough boozy jams, rave-ups and just plain great live tracks, many from the BBC which acted at times as their "home club," to cement their prestige.

The Faces were, all things considered, just a great, fun-loving rock band, and this collection captures them, in all their brazen glory.

***** 1/2 - Mark T. Gould

GUY DAVIS

"Authentic Country Blues, Bound For Glory"

Legacy/Red House Records

Legacy (Red House Records), the new release and seventh CD by Guy Davis, is a superb recording of acoustic country blues. This collection of blues classics and original material is by far his very best work to date. While listening to Legacy, I couldn't help but wonder if he possibly traveled back in time and learned from the masters themselves. Davis delivers genuine authenticity and deep understanding of the genre on each of the album's 15 tracks, his growth as an artist clearly shines from start to finish.

Legacy contains seven blues classics from legends like, Mississippi John Hurt, Sleepy John Estes, Lightnin' Hopkins and Skip James, Davis performing these with the slightest variation. Eight tracks are original compositions, showcasing this singer/songwriters intuitive talent, each song reflecting the essence of this treasured format. His method in combining blues classics with his own material has resulted in a wonderful balance of music throughout the album. Davis has the ability to integrate a natural purity to the overall sound of the genre, making Legacy a solid, cohesive re-

cording. A few examples are, "I Just Can't Help Loving You" a moving, passionate song with strong vocals and fine mandolin accompaniment. "Red Goose" is a fast paced, banjo driven country blues tune with plenty of bluegrass overtones. "We All Need More Kindness In This World", this gospel style, country blues tune delivers a very simple message for everyone. The very best Davis original happens to be the opening track of Legacy, "Uncle Tom's Dead". This powerful opening number is a standard 12 bar blues, overlapped by a distinct urban, hip-hop mix, with lyrics that'll definitely grab your attention. You'll find Davis and his son Martial, strongly debating the generational divide surrounding the blues, its history and its place in today's society.

Davis is no stranger to the performing arts, he's the son of actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee. He starred in musicals, even worked as an actor on the daytime soap, One Life To Live. Davis is a storyteller who found his calling in the blues, with six recordings, two W.C. Handy nominations this year and now the latest release of his new recording Legacy, Davis has earned his place within the blues community. No longer just a blues guitarist, Davis is a well respected musician, considered one of the finest contemporary country bluesman and part of the present day country blues revival.

There isn't a bad track to be found on Legacy, even the packaging for this new CD is unique and very inviting with it's "comic book" theme, definitely a "must see". I highly recommend Legacy, for blues enthusiasts or anyone who enjoys quality fingerpicking acoustic country blues.

www.guydavis.com

**** - Pamela L. Dow

U2

"How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb"

Interscope Records

So it's been 25 years since U2 planted their roots in the midst of the European punk revolution. Now, more polished and introspective, with little hint of the punk edge that brightened their early years, the band has weathered the storms and proven themselves still relevant. Their last CD, "All That You Can't Leave Behind," and world concert tour provided fans a bit of salve amidst the horror in NYC. With the release of HTDAAB last month, we are treated to the thoughts of a band that has taken the ensuing 3 years seriously, but remains cautiously hopeful. I have heard several compare this

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CD's message and musicology to "The Joshua Tree." I can't quite go along with that. With the backdrop of the loss of his father, the fight to relieve third world debt and other political endeavors, and the drastic changes in the world since 1987, Bono and the band have crafted a set that is derived from vast experience and heartache. A bit weary, but full of spirit that they did not have back then.

Until November 22, 2004, there was not a rock band on this planet in their 25th year that has released an album that is both commercially accessible and lyrically relevant until now. You might say Bob Dylan's last two certainly were as good, but I am referring to groups only. Without question, there is no band or individual bigger on the music scene today than U2 and Bono. The impressive thing is that they widen their audience range with each release covering the MTV crowd to baby boomers. Big shoes to fill for certain. "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb" shows that they are taking themselves and their fans seriously. Of course, we've all heard the CD's opening tune "Vertigo" – or at least part of it – for months on TV or the web, and it is what it is. A hard rocking anthem similar to "Beautiful Day" on the last album, and many other such grabbers that they have interlaced into their prior 10 full length releases.

U2 already tried to be something different in the 1990's (not that I was disappointed with those mid-'90's efforts), but ultimately we are all wired a certain way, and we do some things better than others. U2 does hard rock with a political, spiritual, and grandiose edge like no other. However, HTDAAB is not necessarily regurgitation. U2 is most certainly playing their tune to the current times. Thus, they have hooked "Vertigo" and their name to a new iPod. I say fine. iPods are cool. However, some of the best tunes on the album are where Bono bears his soul. In particular, "Sometimes You Can't Make It On Your Own" about his father's death in 2001 during their last tour. It was played live on Saturday Night Live a couple weeks ago, and you could feel the kind of passion in that song that we haven't heard since the late 1980's/early 1990's. That's where some of the aforementioned comparisons might be relevant. Another standout in this 11-tune set is "City of Blinding Lights" which demonstrates U2's continued sonic and melodic command. When all is said and done, this album fits nicely in any U2 fan's collection. We'll listen to it constantly for the next year until the tour leaves our part of the country, then we'll put it back in the

U2 section of our CD rack and pull out "Achtung Baby," "The Joshua Tree," or "War." Five or ten years from now when hopefully we have a Democrat as President, and we are out of Iraq, we'll pull out HTDAAB, and say "wow" this album really was saying something to us.

- Dave Geller

ERIC BIBB

"Friends"

Telarc Records

Eric Bibb leads the pack of modern acoustic blues players, churning out a rich blend of heartfelt music that incorporates folk, country, blues, gospel and soul. Born in New York City in 1951, Bibb grew up in a musical environment, the son of 1960's folk and theater singer Leon Bibb. His career began in Europe, and his debut recording, "Good Stuff", was released in 1997. Bibb's musical resume also includes a Grammy nomination and W.C. Handy nominations for Artist of the Year, Acoustic Blues and Acoustic Blues Album of the Year in 2003. Recently signed to the Telarc label, Bibb follows up on his recent joint effort with Rory Block and Maria Muldaur ("Sisters & Brothers") with "Friends", a collection of recordings featuring Bibb accompanied by a variety of guests that have been part of his musical influence over the span of his career.

"Friends" has a number of bright spots. Tracks like "For You" or his cover of Taj Mahal's "Lovin' in my Baby's Eyes", for example, are melodic and soulful in their delivery. Mahal, the first musician requested by Bibb to make a guest appearance, lends a hand on the bluesy "Goin' Down Slow", in what Bibb refers to his collaboration with Taj as one of the highlights of his musical career. "Connected", "Ribbons and Bows", and "Dance Me to the End of Love" are all fine examples of well-crafted folk songs that Bibb and his guests deliver straight from the heart.

Eric Bibb is an authentic blues musician. He offers a strong collaboration with a number of outstanding blues musicians discovered throughout his musical journey. With the intention of showcasing the musicians that he respects and admires most, it is clear from the very first listen of "Friends" that Eric Bibb has accomplished what he set out to do and has done so admirably.

- Don Sikorski

Rolling Stones

"Singles 1965-1967"

ABKCo

This, the second in the collection of the Rolling Stones' singles from their earliest eras, signifies their move from a blues-based covers band to the Jagger-Richard(s) songwriting that propelled them into the rock and roll stratosphere.

In their first few years, more than ably covered by the first box set in this series, the Stones covered, and virtually copied, their roots, releasing songs by Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, Chuck Berry and other of their musical heroes as they developed their own sound. Here, though, the band's own gifts come shining through, placing them on a pedestal previously, and arguably subsequently, reached only by the Beatles.

The breadth and depth of the songs themselves are mind-blowing. The fuzz-rock based "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," with that signature riff borne out of a sleepless haze by the indomitable Richards; the perfect pop of "Get Off My Cloud" and "As Tears Go By;" The destructive tendencies and paranoia of "Mother's Little Helper" and "We Love You;" and the pure psychedelia of "She's a Rainbow," "2000 Light Years From Home," and "The Lantern."

This superb collection ends just before the triumphant return to form signaled by the single "Honky Tonk Women," presumably included in the third volume, scheduled for release early next year. Until then, rock on with the absolute best in the business, at the top of their singles game.

1/2

- Mark T. Gould

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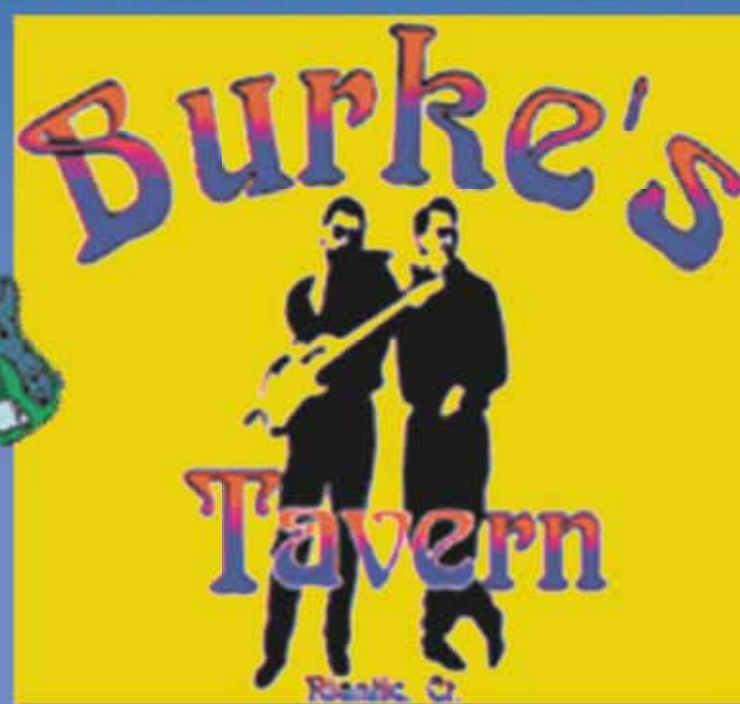
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