CD Reviews

Albums

Carus
Songs From Martin St
(Independent/MGM)

Carus Thompson and an interesting cast of stars come together for this wonderful collection of eclectic acoustic folk tracks. The album has an enveloping warmth and sweetness, feel good acoustic music filled with tasteful instrumentation. The album sees Carus and company explore styles from folk to country, reggae and folk. There is something of Paul Kelly in 'Cup A Tea' - beautifully helped by Charlie Owen's outstanding slide guitar. The gentle country tinged folk of 'Just To Get To You' works brilliantly as a duet, with Wait Vicki Simpson doing the harmonies. The bluesey reggae of 'Gonna Leave This Town' brings a hypnotic groove to the album, and you can hear the performers, including John Butler on his 11 string guitar, relishing the upbeat 'Moonrise'. This is the debut album of a solid and capable songwriter. It is unashamedly human music, stripped back and performed without pretensions or being overbearing. A great disc. **M.N.**

Ziggy Marley
Dragonfly (BMG)

1995's **Free Like We Want 2 B** was Ziggy's last consistently good album, (recorded with plus Flea, John Frusciante, Tyrone Downie and David Lindley), Ziggy's greatest weakness is still his lyric-writing, and some songs struggle to develop - 'I Get Out' falls into the latter category, with the title track, boasting nice instrumentation, landing in the lyric-deficient pile – earnest words that don't quite come together. Only so-so, but we won't panic just yet. **K.P.**

The Swans Of Avon
17th Century Poet (I Like It Raw)

Subtitled **The Songs Of William Shakespeare**, these are actual *songs* written by the Bard, now put to music, with lyrics unchanged, by Melbourne's Jason Freddi, (vocals, guitar, keyboards, harmonica), and friends - C.C. Thornley, (banjo, bass), Anne Eastaugh, (violin), and Rachel Gadd, (flute). Setting the songs to a light folk/country/bluegrass mix, Freddi has breathed amazing life into centuries-old material. Opener 'Live With Me' is not that far removed from the Byrds' excellent interpretation of Dylan's 'You Ain't Going Nowhere', (nor 'I Am Gone Sir' from his 'Wheel's On Fire'), and 'Sweet Lovers Love The Spring' appears to owe a slight debt to the Gourds' version of Snoop Dogg's 'Gin And Juice' – but whatever the source material, the end result is an impressive effort. The beautiful 'Come Hither' and 'Hey Ho The Wind & The Rain' are the standouts. (**17th Century Poet** is available exclusively from the Last Record Store in Fitzroy) **K.P.**

Yo La Tengo
Summer Sun
(Matador Records/Inertia Distribution)

Georgia Hubley, aided by various like-minded souls, are more than content to boldly travel in several different directions at once. Here, 'Beach Party Tonight' features backward tape loops and vocals reminiscent of the Cocteau Twins, 'Winter A-Go-Go' has Hubley backed by a '60's Wurlitzer organ, 'Georgia vs Yo La Tengo' could have been recorded for a funky, mid-'70's blaxploitation flick and 'Season Of The Shark' is pure Belle & Sebastian. Be adventurous and listen to the inventiveness, or put it on as background – the album is as endlessly entertaining as the band itself. **K.P.**

Rogue Traders

Album Essential

Liz Phair
Exile In Guyville (1993)

As an incredibly beautiful, (yet incredibly shy), 26 year old, Liz Phair debuted with an atomic wake-up call to the then male dominated mid-90's rock world. Taking the Rolling Stones legendary **Exile On Main Street** album as a template, (nods include the black-and-white cover shot that apes a rear cover image of Mick Jagger), the most obvious comparison is that **Exile In Guyville** r.o.c.k.s.

Lo-fi recorded with producer/buddy Brad Wood, **...Guyville** includes some of modern rock's greatest moments - and lyrics - perhaps most notably 'F**k And Run', the song that became the instant

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Yeah Yeah Yeahs
Fever To Tell (Modular)

In Australia for last year's Meredith Music Festival, New York three-piece the Yeah Yeah Yeahs made quite an impact - Karen O's full-on stage antics in particular. Alternately pouring VB and water into her mouth and letting it run back out down her front onto the stage, (which had to be mopped dry after their set), rollicking on between songs, O, (plus Nick Zinner on guitars and Brian Chase on drums), often appeared to be pulling moves perfected in front of the rehearsal-room mirror back in the Big Apple – but man, they rocked!

And so does this much-anticipated debut

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