

Four new CDs get the grade from the Beacon

The Foo Fighters get heavy with their new album 'One By One'

review by Kevin Fallon
staff writer

For better or worse, Dave Grohl can't shake his past. The same force that feeds his stardom and success also pulls him down by referring to him as "that dude from Nirvana."

Grohl battled the demons of his past on previous Foo Fighters' albums in songs such as "Hero" and "Stacked Actors." And while the band's latest album "One By One" may not directly reflect on the Nirvana days, one can't help feel the eerie presence of Kurt Cobain.

"One By One's" timing couldn't be more ironic, seeing how Nirvana's greatest-hits album, featuring the lost track "You Know You're Right," was released a week later.

The album starts with Grohl's eerie whispers, "all my life I've been searching for something...the feeling it comes to life when I see your ghost," on "All My Life," one of the highlights of the album.

Despite Grohl's connection with Nirvana, he has managed to make a name for himself. Grohl found his voice on 97's "The Colour and the Shape," an album that is both powerful and gutsy.

Musically "One By One" is stripped-down, driving rock that is heavier than previous albums. Grohl adds balance by moving from whisper to gritty scream. "One By One" is a solid album done in typical Foo fashion. The influence of Queens of the Stone Age, who Grohl drummed for this summer, can be heard on songs such as "Low."



PHOTO FROM ROLLINGSTONE.COM

"I pity the Fool" The Foo Fighters' get a C+ for "One By One."

However, "One By One" is not as addictive or catchy as "The Colour and the Shape" or "There is Nothing Left to Lose," and has few surprises. Although, "One By One" is both raw and fun at points, it never quite takes off.

Perhaps Grohl will never live down his Nirvana days. But he has proven himself with the Foo Fighters. Maybe it's the fans

who have to put the past behind them and take the days without Cobain "One By One."

Grade: B-

review by Kevin Fallon
staff writer

Beck shows a 'Change' of heart on new album

review by Kevin Fallon
staff writer

Go ahead, break Beck's heart, see what happens. He'll make the best album of his career.

"Sea Change" breaks away from Beck's typical pseudo-rapping, silly-funk style. Beck, who became a poster-boy for slackers with "Loser," shows that he has a serious side. "Sea Change" expresses Beck's newfound musical maturity though his newfound sorrow.

At times it's just Beck and a guitar. Then he'll use orchestral accompaniment on songs such as "Paper Tiger" and "Lonesome Tears" to provide a deeper sense of gloom.

Although, "Sea Change" is a sad record, you don't get weighed down with a sense of depression. Rather, Beck creates a quiet but somber atmosphere where he reflects on a love gone bad. On "Sea Change" Beck is like a folkie Coldplay with the passionate and starry mood he creates.

On "Guess I'm Doing Fine" Beck sings of sadly sarcastic emotions, "it's only you that I'm losing, it's only tears that I'm crying, I guess I'm doing fine." You can feel

Beck's pain on "The Golden Age" when he croons, "These days I barely get by, I don't even try."

Beck may be singing the blues, but it never sounded so beautiful.



PHOTO FROM ROLLINGSTONE.COM

Cheer up, Beck. Your new CD is a winner.

Beck wrote the sad "Sea Change" after parting with his long-time girlfriend. On "Sea Change" Beck has become a heartbroken but charming cowboy. Here, Beck exposes his acoustic folk side, and wears his heart on his sleeve for the first time.

Grade: A-

Punk gets a Transplant

review by Josh Wilczynski
staff writer

The Transplants are no strangers to punk rock. The band features members of Blink-182 and Rancid.

The Transplants are the perfect solution for anyone who is looking



PHOTO FROM MTV.COM

Members of Rancid and Blink-182 get transplanted into a punk super-group.

for a band with ear-plitting vocals and ingenious sound.

This band is truly a punk-rock powerhouse. Rob Aston and Rancid's Tim Armstrong trade off guitar and vocals while Blink-182's and Boxcar Racer's Travis Barker wails away on drums. No band could go wrong with all-time punk legends like Armstrong and Barker.

Although, Barker brings the beats, very little of Blink's pop sound is heard on the Transplants CD. The band sounds more like Rancid's raw and dirty version of punk rock.

Aston's vocals border old-school hardcore and even bring in some rap

qualities.

These guys definitely know how to make some noise. Their self-titled debut release from Epitaph shows just what this trio is capable of. They combine the music that Armstrong created on his Pro Tools System with other guitars, drums, samples, and loops to make some crazy sounds that are extremely raw and chaotic. You will truly be impressed.

If you are wondering how they sound vocally, then you probably have never heard of Aston or Armstrong before.

Simply put these guys rock. Aston and Armstrong wreak havoc with their fast and ferocious vocals throughout the CD's 12 loud tracks.

If Aston, Armstrong, and Barker still do not impress you very much, then how

about all of the CD's guest vocalists?

Other punk-rock heavy hitters like Rancid's Matt Freeman, AFI's Davey Havoc, Rancid's Lars Frederickson, and The Distillers' Brody Armstrong all add their own vocal talents to several of the already vocally superb tracks. If that still doesn't do it for you, then you can probably assume that you are not a big fan of punk rock.

So if you are looking for an extremely heavy and intense sound, then I would highly recommend this CD to you.

Grade: B

Art Garfunkel releases new music that is just waiting to be noticed



PHOTO FROM ARTGARFUNKEL.COM

Who cares about the CD? Art Garfunkel gets an A+ for the fro.

review by Erin McCarty
news editor

After nearly 40 years as an internationally acclaimed musician, Art Garfunkel has unveiled an album demonstrating his talents as a songwriter. Garfunkel shares songwriting credits on six of the 13 tracks on the aptly named "Everything Waits to be Noticed," which is a collaborative effort with musicians Maia Sharp and Buddy Mondlock and producer Billy Mann. Astute fans familiar with "Still Water," Garfunkel's collection of prose poems, will recognize in these songs traces of his poetry.

"Bounce" and "Perfect Moment" served as an enticing preview to this album when they were featured on the WB show "Felicity" in 2001. The rich harmonies, intricate guitar work, and energy of "Bounce," the album's first track, set a tone for the rest of the album, showcasing how

well Garfunkel, Sharp, and Mondlock complement one another. "Perfect Moment," co-written by Garfunkel, is a soft, dreamy remembrance of a first encounter between lovers, accentuating the ephemeral nature of that one perfect moment when their eyes first met.

Garfunkel's writing contributions are present on several of the album's highlights. The title track focuses on all the tiny details in life that deserve attention from the outside world and highlights Mondlock's vocals. "The Thread" highlights Sharp's vocals and saxophone savvy and juxtaposes time and place to illustrate the connection between two people.

Other album standouts include "The Kid," the plaintive tale of a dreamer who knows most of his dreams will never come true but

pursues them anyway. This track's menacing percussion is reminiscent of Simon and Garfunkel's classic "The Boxer."

The album is a departure from most of Garfunkel's solo work, which is characterized by richly orchestral ballads befitting his range and romantic sensibilities. The harmonic tightness among the three performers invites comparison to Garfunkel's early work with Paul Simon, but this album is a new and distinct manifestation of his talent. In addition to being a very personal album for Garfunkel, it also introduces his fans to the lesser-known but extremely talented Sharp and Mondlock. This latest addition to the Garfunkel catalogue is lush, compelling, and well worth the wait.

Grade: A-

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