

Reviewer gives the dirt on new Alice and Chains

Rich "The Dickster" Howarth
Capital Times Staff

The Dickster's album ratings are based on a five "D" scale.

OUR TIME IN EDEN 10,000 MANIACS

Ah, the soothing voice of Natalie Merchant. She's probably the best female vocalist in the industry today, and definitely the appeal of the Maniacs. She could sing nursery rhymes from Mother Goose and make the top ten.

Our Time is the third effort for the band, and although it contains some great songs like "Noah's Dove," "These Are Days," "Tolerance" and "I'm Not The Man," it is not their best effort.

If you're a Maniacs fan, you might be disappointed. **DDD 1/2**

GOOD AS I BEEN TO YOU BOB DYLAN

He's been playing his guitar for thirty-some years and he's not about to stop now.

Good As I Been To You is typically

DICK'S PIX 'N NIX

Dylan, full of folksy guitar and raspy vocals. There's no denying that Mr. Dylan is a great lyricist and guitarist, but *Good* sounds just like any other Dylan album.

Good sports 13 new songs that all sound like you've heard them a hundred times before. If you're only going to own one Dylan album, don't let it be this one. **DD**

PEACE AND LOVE, INC. INFORMATION SOCIETY

I've got one word for you--techno. It's

the latest music craze that's sweeping the nation, and Information Society is no stranger to the world of techno.

Peace and Love is the Society's third effort, and it is definitely happening. The album features electronic beats and samples that combine to form a type of music you would swear was created by a computer. In fact, track 12 is computer data and not a musical selection at all.

Peace is very danceable and worth several listens, trust me. **DDD 1/2**

DIRT ALICE IN CHAINS

If you like your music hard and fast, you're gonna love the latest from Alice In Chains. Forget about "Man in the Box," that Alice doesn't live here anymore.

Driving, wailing, high-energy guitar leads provide the fuel that keeps *Dirt* burning hot--RED HOT. And the vocals aren't that bad either. In fact, they're great!

"Them Bones," "Dam That River," "Sickman," "Dirt," "Down In A Hole," and "Hate To Feel" are the cream of *Dirt*.

Call it what you like--heavy metal, rock 'n' roll, death metal--*Dirt* will rock your f**king world. **DDDD 1/2**

AMERICAN STANDARD MARY'S DANISH

Mary's Danish are no amateurs to the world of college radio. *American Standard* is their third release in three years.

This time around, they're backed by a lot of industry big-wigs. Wow, they recorded at George Lucas' Skywalker studios. Sorry, but that doesn't make *Standard* any better.

The vocals of Julie Ritter and Gretchen Seager give this album a unique sound indeed, but 13 songs is all I can take. Two songs that really shine on *Standard* are "Killjoy" and "Porcupine." For best results, listen in moderation. **DDD**

Loud rock 'n' roll: how Sweet it is

Ed Paukstis
Special to the Capital Times

Zoo recording artist Matthew Sweet proved to his audience that rock 'n' roll can be therapeutic when he performed at Club Met in Harrisburg on Election Night.

The pale-faced, flu-stricken singer made his way to center stage, by way of escort, almost 45 minutes late with guitar in hand. The rest of his band followed close behind.

After a brief one or two chord sound check and a false start, Sweet and his band, who have played with such underground musical legends as Richard Hell and Marshall Crenshaw, let loose on the Beatlesque, soul-searching song "Divine Intervention," and then hooked the crowd with the jangly guitar-driven song, "I've Been Waiting."

Mary Divney, associate director of Zoo Entertainment, said that Sweet had canceled an interview with WTPA (93.5 FM) and refused to use his voice, even to communicate with his band and crew. Despite his condition, he delivered a well-rounded, ear-deafening performance.

"We usually don't play as loud as this," said Sweet's manager Russell Carter. "I think that Matthew was trying to compensate for his voice by playing twice as loud and not talking during the day."

"After the first or second song, I thought my ears were going to bleed," said Matt Homovich, a senior electrical engineering technology major. "Right then, I knew this show was not going to be mellow."

Highlights of the evening included a bluesy version of "Girlfriend," the title track from Sweet's current album, and the

seminal country stomping of "Evangeline," and the emotional ballad "Winona"--both of which are reminiscent of vintage Neil Young.

Sweet surprised the audience with two cover songs during his encore: L7's "Pretend We're Dead," and the Beatles' "She Said She Said," which includes the lyrics "I know what it's like to be dead"--most appropriate considering his condition.

Although Sweet's lyrics can sometimes be depressing and deal mostly with self-doubt, heartbreak, and indifference to religion, his music does combine hook

melodies and harmonies, with blues-based guitar and occasional "grunge" (distorted guitar) which makes them a lot easier for his audience to digest.

Sweet said that his next album could be a departure, rather than a continuation of "Girlfriend" because of his infatuation with grunge.

Carter added that Sweet has a wide range of musical interests, including country, funk, psychedelic, folk and classic rock 'n' roll.

"I don't know what the key to longevity is," said Sweet. "But I hope to stay in the business for quite some time."

Swimming through Black Water is a joy

Bonnie Etzweiler
Capital Times Staff

Joyce Carol Oates has taken a story from the headlines of yesterday, transplanted it into today and created a masterpiece of suspense, wonder and dread with the book *Black Water*.

The following excerpt is both page one and chapter one:

The rented Toyota, driven with such impatient exuberance by The Senator, was speeding along the unpaved unnamed road, taking the turns in giddy skidding slides, and then, with no warning, somehow the car had gone off the road and had overturned in black rushing water, listing to its passenger's side, rapidly sinking.
"Am I going to die?--like this?"

The above speaker is Kelly Kelleher. The story is told from her viewpoint. She is "the one, the girl" chosen by The Senator to accompany him on this fatal meeting with black water.

Kelly Kelleher represents the ideal

American girl who is witty, bright and brave but also hopelessly entangled in dreams of romance.

We learn about Kelly's background by following her to the brink of disaster only to be whisked back in time and brought forward again and again. Each time we come one step closer to an end we dread but know is inevitable.

The Senator is the hero Kelly has always admired but never expected to meet. She always refers to him as "The Senator." She never refers to him by name or sees him as a normal person with bad points only good.

Rarely have I been as intrigued by a book as I was with *Black Water*. I was fascinated by the number of angles and devices Joyce Carol Oates uses to jerk us from, and lead us back, to the black water.

This story takes an intense look at the final hours of a young woman's life and the underlying cultural values that lead her to her death.

If you only have time to read one book for pleasure this semester, try *Black Water* by Joyce Carol Oates.

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