

Metallica's sixth is a good mix Newest album will reach wider audience

by Jon Flick
The Collegian

Metallica's self-titled sixth album (Elektra records) looks like a real winner. The production, by Bob Rock with lead vocalist James Hetfield and percussionist Lars Ulrich, proved to be top-notch. Waiting three years for this album was definitely worth it.

Small surprises lie waiting for Metallica fans on this new album. It seems that, in general, the band is aiming for a more mainstream audience. One does not really need a lyric sheet to understand Hetfield's vocals. The speed-metal approach used in the 1988 album *...and Justice for All* has been abandoned for a slower, slightly more contemporary format.

All this does not necessarily mean the band is growing weary. The songs still execute the distinctive Metallica sharp edge, but now, rather than thrash-only fans, more people can enjoy the awesome sound.

Metallica obviously enjoyed the success of their 1988 video, "One." Their current hit, "Enter Sandman," is getting plenty of MTV airplay, and is also making the rounds of popular radio. The cut is even being played on popular Erie radio stations, a first for Metallica.

Along with the fact that "...Sandman" is an excellent

track, one can predict that non-headbangers might take an active interest in what Metallica has to offer.

Powerful vocals by Hetfield make "Sad But True," the next track, rip into you like a knife. This slower tempo track has enough drive to perk you up as you listen, yet is slow enough to keep you from tearing your



ceiling tiles out.

What follows is classic inspired Metallica writing with "Holier Than Thou." What an accurate description of those who love to think about others more than themselves! Kirk Hammet performed brilliantly with some excellent guitar work here.

Now comes the most pleasant surprise of the album. "The

Unforgiven" is a beautiful Metallica ballad. It commences with a clean, chilling melody, followed by a heavy stretch with powerful Hetfield vocals. The song returns to clean, and so does Hetfield, whose voice becomes surprisingly soft. It really worked on this track, which is somewhat reminiscent of "Fade to Black," from the *Ride the Lightning* album.

"Nothing Else Matters" lies on the same line with "...Unforgiven," as a beautiful slow song. Production was very smooth on this cut and the band's talents were combined with a beautiful orchestral arrangement by Michael Kamen.

Just a couple tracks away are the hard-hitting songs, "The God That Failed," and "My Friend of Misery." These songs are ideal showcases for bassist Jason Newsted, who has a brief solo at the beginning of each.

Those are just the highlights of the sixth album from one of the founders of modern heavy metal. Every self-respecting metalhead should have this album in their collection. Those who only have tape decks will rejoice that *Metallica* was recorded in DIGalog. This system markedly improves the sound quality over that of standard cassette recordings. There is no reason not to get this album.

Living Colour cooks up *Biscuits*

by Brad Kane
The Collegian

The best hard rock band in America, period. No longer is Living Colour merely the best black rock band in the country, but with the release of last year's searing *Time's Up* and the recent arrival of the EP *Biscuits* in stores, Vernon Reid and company stand poised on the mantel of greatness.

Too much praise, one might ask, for a band that's released only three albums so far? Just check out *Biscuits* for any further reassurance. A collection of covers and live tracks, *Biscuits* allows Living Colour to explore the band's musical roots while forging onward, tearing down musical barriers.

remake of Jimi Hendrix's "Burning of the Midnight Lamp."

As for the live tracks, two cuts from the 1988 debut album, *Vivid*, are featured. "Desperate People," recorded at New York's CBGB is a scalding track, featuring Reid's relentless walls of guitars and drummer Will Calhoun's brain rattling time-keeping.

These and many more elements are evident on the live cut of "Memories Can't Wait," caught at The Ritz two years ago. While "Memories," also from *Vivid*, may not necessarily be one of Living Colour's finest songs, the diversity of this Talking Head's-penned tune is brought to light when it's played live. Glover's voice soars as Muzz

"Oh-so-slight hip-hop influences and Reid's droning guitar combine to form a smash single."

The bridging of funk, hard-core, reggae, and all-out R&B soul combine to form an excellent mix.

The highlights are everywhere here. From the driving soul of "Love and Happiness," an Al Green tune on which vocalist Corey Glover shines, to the all-out hard-core of "Money Talks," a Living Colour original.

The album's lead single, "Talkin' Loud and Saying Nothing," currently lodged in the Modern Rock chart Top 20, is an excellent rendition of the James Brown original. Oh-so-slight hip-hop influences and Reid's droning guitar combine to form a smash single.

Reid also remains faithful to the original with funk-influenced fretwork on the

Skilling's bass drives the song onward to a reggae tinged ending.

It's fitting that some live material has made its way onto *Biscuits*. Living Colour is an excellent concert act, adding additional touches to a song that, when played live, comes across better than the recorded original does. Not all musical acts can claim this type of status today.

It's too bad that *Biscuits* isn't a full length album. Every song is hot, oven-fresh; not just good to admire, but excellent to sample as well. Maybe these biscuits are too good. For when the tasting is through, the sampler will be left hungry for much, much more.

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