

# Entertainment in review

Thursday, December 5, 1991

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-- On tape --



of year again...

an's annual critics' picks. Added the year's top movies to c releases. Some of these may and some may look totally new -- 1991 has had some great rs and the record stores.

New Kids fans, keep the faith. n the way, and you can look s list next year -- not.



by Robb Frederick  
*The Collegian*

1.  
**Lenny Kravitz**  
*Mama Said*

From the effects-drenched "Fields of Joy" and the retro "Stop Draggin' Around" to the emotional confession of "All I Ever Wanted," Kravitz belted out the year's most diversified album. One minute he's screaming along with Slash's guitar; the next he's bopping to a Lawrence Welk beat. Kravitz's message may be stuck in the sixties, but his music is still fresher than anything else around.

2.  
**Animal Logic**  
*Animal Logic II*

The first release from this well-schooled trio was a nice surprise; the follow up is like the \$20 bill you find in those jeans you haven't worn for months. Bassist Stanley Clarke and Police-veteran Stewart Copeland return in fine form, and vocalist Deborah Holland continues to impress with her crystal-clear vocals.

3.  
**Robbie Robertson**  
*Storyville*

The ten tracks on *Storyville* were written as a homage to New Orleans, but Robertson's solemn portrayal of nightlife applies on a more universal scale. With a raspy whisper, Robertson sketches visions of a shadowy, smoke-filled underworld, where love lines don't quite cross and the future is lost in a blur of empty bar glasses.

4.  
**Bonnie Raitt**  
*Luck of the Draw*

Good blues singers don't age gracefully -- and that's what makes them good. But Raitt, fresh off her Grammy-sweeping *Nick of Time*, has lightened up in recent years. This time around, she deals the good with the bad, balancing light-hearted tracks like "Good Man, (Good Woman)" next to a stripped-down song ballad like "All at Once."

5.  
**Blues Traveler**  
*Travelers & Thieves*

Vocalist John Popper eases off the harmonica on this sophomore effort, but traces of the band's explosive self-titled debut are still here. The primary difference is in song length; on tracks like "All in the Groove" and "Mountain Cry," the band catches a groove and keeps on going. That may be the kiss of death as far as radio airplay is concerned, but when you're this good, people tend to notice anyway.

by Brad Kane  
*The Collegian*

1.  
**Nirvana**  
*Nevermind*

Yes, it's trendy to like them, but Nirvana's *Nevermind* is the album of the year. Start to finish, top to bottom, it's an all out slash and burn grungefest orgy. What else can be said about 'em that hasn't already been said? Buy it - kill if you must - listen to it, love it, live it...

2.  
**Pixies**  
*Trompe le Monde*

Boston's finest (screw Aerosmith) rebound from 1990's disappointing *Bossanova* and "fool the world" with a top-rate album. Black Francis is screaming again, and damn, does it sound good. You need only maim to get your hands on this gem.

3.  
**Kitchens of Distinction**  
*Strange Free World*

With Morrissey in a musical coma, and ex-cohort Johnny Marr feeling under the weather, where does one turn to get depressed these days? How about lending an ear toward Patrick Fitzgerald and his outstanding three-man English outfit. With lyrics forged from pure tears and anguish, Fitzgerald stands as a much more accessible version of Your Majesty Morrissey.

4.  
**Fugazi**  
*Steady Diet of Nothing*

Those of you who read *Spin* know what the fuss is about - here stands America's best band (sorry REM, sorry Sonic Youth). For those of us who've known about these guys for a few years, *Steady Diet* is not their best (check out the 1988 self-titled debut), but just being Fugazi is good enough for me. Singer-guitarist Ian MacKaye is the closest thing to a god that I've ever seen, heard, or experienced.

5.  
**U2**  
*Achtung Baby*  
**REM**  
*Out of Time*

Now for you alternative veterans here's a little consolation - we have a tie between two of music's finest groups ever. Remember 1988, when REM blew it with *Green* and U2 blew it even worse with *Rattle and Hum*? Well, now in 1991 both hands return to prominence in fine fashion. You know about REM, but *Achtung Baby* is a darkly beautiful, groove-heavy, entrancing album - atypical U2, but wonderful nonetheless.

by Greg Geibel  
*The Collegian*

1.  
**Rush**  
*Roll The Bones*

Brought to you by the letter "B" this time, Rush returns with one of their best releases to date. Drummer and lyricist Neil Peart confronts the different issues of life while bassist Geddy Lee and guitarist Alex Lifeson produce some seriously cool tunes. So... Roll The Bones and Get Busy!

2.  
**Van Halen**  
*For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge*

Hey! Where'd that bass guitar come from?! With the much needed addition of a new producer, Andy Johns helps Van Halen finally get some bottom end to their songs and some Poundcake for your stereo. And more importantly, it's Van Halen...you gotta problem with that?

3.  
**Animal Logic**  
*Animal Logic II*

Well wouldn't you know it. It figures that Robb Frederick would lay down his Top 5 picks before me and say all of those neat things about Animal Logic and how good they are. If it wasn't for me, he would still be thinking that Animal Logic was something that is controlled by the cerebral cortex in the brain of a rhesus monkey.

4.  
**Infectious Grooves**  
*The Plague That Makes Your Booty Move*

A splinter group from the Suicidal Tendencies, the Infectious Grooves are a cross between the Chili Peppers and your worst nightmare. Mixing punk, funk, rap, and thrash, the Infectious Grooves will funk with your head and make your day very slappy.

5.  
**David Lanz**  
*Return To The Heart*

Trying to summarize his long and fruitful piano career, Lanz travelled throughout Europe and immersed himself in the rich culture. Avoiding the recording studio, Lanz recorded his works in settings that would inspire each work: a church in Amsterdam; a palace in Madrid; a recital hall in Munich; and an opera house in Carpi, Italy.

by Paul Plisiewicz  
*The Collegian*

1.  
**Psychedelic Furs**  
*World Outside*

This is their eighth and best album. Richard Butler's lyrics are in top form and the band has never been tighter. The newly added second guitar adds a richness that complements the Furs' haunting melodies, and they've dropped completely their delusions of pop grandeur and stuck to what they do best.

2.  
**Robyn Hitchcock and the Egyptians**  
*Perspex Island*

The most melodic Hitchcock album that also contains several "ought-to-be" hits. It's more straightforward than the earlier stuff which struck me as very safe at first, but now it's hard to put it back on the shelf.

3.  
**Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, (OMD)**  
*Sugar Tax*

I'm the world's most avid OMD fan, and I was "Crush"-ed when I heard the band split up. Only Andy McCluskey remains and he does a terrific job on this album. His vocals are as stunning as ever and the lyrics always tend to strike a chord with my own life. The music sounds as if the band could still be behind him. The album is smooth and yet not slick. This is an album you could fall in love to as well as with.

4.  
**G.W. McLennan**  
*Watershed*

Ex Go-Between Grant McLennan offers a plethora of memorable songs on his first solo album. Every track is filled with punch and honesty and McLennan's gentle voice has never sounded better. The album sounds so bright that even the somber songs are fun. It's undoubtedly listenable.

5.  
**Various Artists**  
*I'm Your Fan*

Several artists of the alternative rock persuasion cover the songs of Leonard Cohen. The bands that participate include R.E.M., Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Robert Forster (the other Go-Between), Ian McCulloch, the Pixies, and others. Cohen's songs are always great and the performances are super and quite interesting. This is my wishful Christmas thinking pick because I don't own it yet.