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MUSIC

Bands still need practice

KZEL 96 Oregon's Best Rock Album

Oregon's best rock? Fortunately not. Radio station KZEL's collection of ten songs labelled as this year's chosen are pretty mediocre.

Although the album has a few entertaining segments, for the most part it's uninspiring.

The judges, according to KZEL's Program Director Ken Martin, selected from the 175 entries with variety in mind. And they succeeded here, presenting listeners with variety ranging from Neumxs' ballad, "Tell Me Do You," to Harlot's metallic "Don't Stop," as well as a bit of fusion. The judges included independent producer David Paul Black, Oregon Country Fair events coordinator Moz Wright, Lane Community College student government cultural events director Mike Moldofsky, Tom Larsen of the Stereo Loft, and KZEL staff members: Martin, Music Director Vince Mertz, Ichabod Murray, Eric Young, Al Scott and Steve Conrad.

One of the major problem areas with these selections is the lyrics.

The aforementioned "Don't Stop" attempts to recreate the sexual experience vocally and musically. The attempt might be successful with pubescent listeners—it did nothing for me.

Cliches ruined the lyrics in Stinger's "Love For Two." "Hold on baby—I've got love for two. It don't matter what you say or do; you know it's true—I'm in love with you." RMS McConnell's "Save a Little" has similar problems.

The "sweet young thing" mentality expressed in a couple of the selections—"She's Learning How to Rock" by Wild Society and Harlot's contribution—adds a final note of mediocrity to these selections.

Lyrics that did venture out into original and entertaining territory

did grace this album in a few selections, however.

Little Big Band's "Love on the Line" made sense to me. It presented the idea that making your partner wait around could be bad for a relationship. This isn't a new idea, but the lyrics chosen by the writer are insightful and well chosen enough to pass the feeling on to listeners. The keyboard melody that punctuates the vocals in this song are distracting, however.

REVIEW

"Someone Else's Nightmare" by Pat Miller's Music Factory has an interesting "warring tribes on the run" theme and is interesting musically, as well.

The opening bars of this band's song take us on a long journey into a bouncy, chase-like melody. There's a lot happening in the opening bars but it's not cacophonous—street noise, a bit of baroque keyboard, and a wailing harmonica all transition very well into the body of the song.

Other highpoints instrumentally happen at the beginning of Kennel Club's "Don't Ask Why" and Stinger's contribution. It seemed like each selection had its shining moments but lost momentum in the long run. And the metal selections often succumbed to anemic lead passages.

Maybe I'm expecting too much. It's hard to be original and brilliant in a field that adds brilliant, original talent to its overflowing ranks daily. A number of these bands remind me of bands I knew in high school—they could always play better than me but they still needed a few years of practice before anyone was gonna run out to buy their records.

—Jackie Berry



Jesse Colin Young

Best known as the founder of The Youngbloods in 1967 and writer of the anthem *Get Together*, Jesse Colin Young is still going strong. After seven albums and hundreds of concerts, the Youngbloods went their separate ways in 1972. Since then Jesse has recorded ten solo albums, toured extensively the world and been very active in environmental causes.

He participated in a 1976 concert in San Luis Obispo to benefit the anti-nuclear Proposition 13. That was one of the first, if not the first, anti-nuke concerts. He's worked with the Cousteau Society, and was a founding member of MUSE (Musicians for Safe Energy). Throughout his nearly twenty years as a writer and performer he has remained true to his commitment to social change and environmental responsibility.

He's traveling with his band which "is the best and tightest I have ever worked with," he says. It includes Nat Ginsberg on keyboards, David Perper on drums, and Jerry Cortez on guitar.

They will perform on Thursday, Dec. 5 in the Eugene Hilton Ballroom at 8 pm. Tickets are \$8.50 in advance, \$9.59 at the door. They're available at Hult outlets, Everybody's Records, EMU Main Desk, and the Hilton Main desk.

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