

REVIEW

The La's hit bullseye; L.A. Guns hit snag

The La's



★★★★

The La's untitled debut album is one of those rare treasures that we get in the mail-room. Admittedly, the four-member band from Liverpool's name doesn't point to a gold mine of creativity, but the music on the album does.

The pop-rock sound of the album has all the hooks in the right places, without falling into the cliché world of top-40 weasels like most bands whose only aspirations seem to be get-

ting air time on MTV. Most of the 12 songs on the album rely more heavily on acoustic, rather than electric sounds. The style of the music is simple and pleasantly melodic without being bland or predictable. The easy-going nature of the songs and memorable tunes will have you tapping your toes and swaying your head in time after the first few notes of each song.

This is not to say each copy of the album should come with bubble gum included. The energy of the band helps pull the sound out from under the rug of top-40 complacency. Songwriter Lee Mavers creates work containing not only likable melodies, but also an undercurrent of tension. The gritty vocals help add to the scrappy, up-and-comer sound of the album. Songs like "Doldrum," "I.O.U.," and "Freedom Song" contain the sense of lament and dissatisfaction with the status

quo that most good music seems to manifest.

"There She Goes," the fifth, and most radio-accessible song on the album has been getting air time on KAVE in Eugene, and the La's video for the song has appeared on MTV — God help them.

If the band can remember what ideas and attitudes were used in creating this album, they can be capable of creating many more pleasing works. Look for them in the future.



★★ 1/2

The first paragraph of the press release attached to the promotional copy of the L.A. Guns new album *Hollywood Vampires* reads: "In a city overflowing with false idols, pretty faces and indistinguishable hard rock bands oozing from the woodwork like a bottomless well, it's good to know that from time to time you can still find the real thing."

This may be true, but the L.A. Guns are definitely not the real thing. *Hollywood Vampires*, the third release by the Guns, adds nothing new to the '90s heavy metal scene. This is the same music that heavy metal bands have been pumping on to the market since Aerosmith joined forces with Run DMC to massacre "Walk This Way." The Guns are indistinguishable from Guns and Roses, Poison, Warrant ... the list goes on. In-

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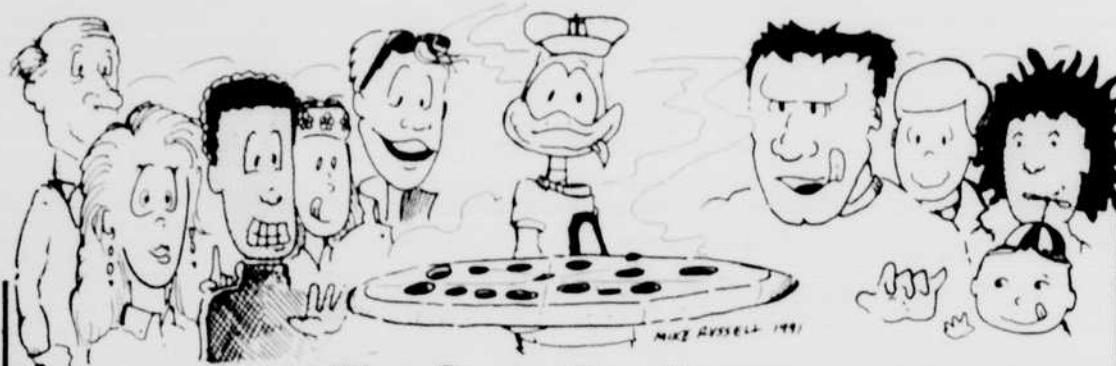
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