

The Millions' new album is 'rich'



The Millions M is for Millions

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★★★

● - listen material, ●● - nothing special,
●●● - worth a listen, ●●●● - quality music

M is for Millions was a pleasant surprise for me, as it will prove to be for fans of The 10,000 Maniacs or Edie Brickell. It is full of rich vocal melodies and harmonies, which, when coupled with its pumping rhythm section, provides a unique twist for the listener.

The opening song, "Guilty," is the ideal introduction to this band. It fades in with a wonderfully melodic and hooky bass line and clean, airy guitars, and then lush vocals that burst into a driving chorus. The Millions' vocalist, Lori Allison, puts her voice on display here, with soaring, transparent highs.

Most impressive is this song's chorus, where her voice takes on a subtle edge most appropriate when The Millions' sound ventures into rockier territory.

Another highlight is "Angus Dei," a cathedral-like chant as an intro to the moody, string-laden "West." The over-dubbed voices combine to form an elegant choir. This uncharacteristic piece is far removed from anything else on the album, and is testimony not only to the supreme vocals of Allison, but the versatility of this new talent.



Paleface Paleface

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★

● - listen material, ●● - nothing special,
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Rarely is my first impression of an album my final one, but this is true of Paleface. It is a collection of 16 songs cast in a folk-acoustic blues mold, all of which suffer from intolerable vocals and uninspired, redundant instrumentation.

Folk music often tells a story or relates some relevant social, political or environmental message. When Paleface attempts this in songs like "Say it like you mean it," "World full of Cops" and "Stupid War Movies," his vocal delivery and lyrical vagueness obscure his meaning.

The music is shallow and pale here, unfortunately lacking the energy and passion that might have brought the album to a point above the inadequate vocals and redundant songwriting.

If you wish to seek Paleface out and give him a try, listen for the tunes mentioned above, as well as "Lift yourself up slowly." These songs are by far the best of a bad album, which is hopefully not the best Paleface has to offer.

By Brandon E. Roberts
Emerald Contributor

Sky Masters offers good military drama



Sky Masters Dale Brown

G.P. Putnam's Sons Publishing,
©1991
510 pages
Hardcover price: \$21.95
Available at the University
Bookstore

★★ 1/2

● - throw it away, ●● - a real disappointment,
●●● - worth the time, ●●●● - a real page-turner

In best-selling author Dale Brown's newest book, *Sky Masters*, his heroic navigator-bombardier Patrick McLanahan returns as a crew member of a high-tech B-2 stealth bomber that helps to oppose a Chinese invasion of the Philippines.

Sky Masters takes place in June of 1994. The United States has returned its Philippine military bases to the country's government. In doing so, most of its previous military influence in the region is gone.

The Spratly island chain is a group of islands whose rights of possession have been contested by the Philippine and Chinese governments throughout the past. In a brief but vicious naval confrontation, a Chinese ship launches a low-yield nu-

clear missile at a Philippine warship.

In the aftermath of the explosion, the vice president of the Philippines removes the rightful president from power. The new government turns control of all the ex-U.S. military bases to the Chinese government.

The U.S. government, afraid of increasing Chinese control over that part of the world, sends two naval fleets to help control the situation. After a series of aggressive moves by both governments, the U.S. and Chinese find themselves in a full-blown military confrontation.

Sky Masters is a well-written novel that, although lacking a comprehensive theme, deals well with both aspects of a modern military and the psychological problems of the people that work for it.

Although at times the plot runs afoul of military technology, losing the reader in a mix of military jargon and futuristic weapons, this lends the novel an authenticity that it otherwise might have lacked.

McLanahan, who appears in other books by Brown, is once again the hot-shot airman who gives us a good look at the mind of an aviator who might be responsible for large-scale destruction.

During a discussion with Jon Masters, an engineer who develops a new reconnaissance

satellites system for the U.S. government, McLanahan shows a side of combat that Masters never before realized. "Combat isn't a series of pre-programmed parameters on a computer monitor — it's men and women who are scared, and brave and angry, and who feel hopeless," McLanahan said. "It's not a clear cut engagement."

Dale Brown, whose previous books have all fallen in the Tom Clancy (*The Hunt for Red October*) category, writes about the U.S. Air Force and the men and women who make it their lives.

Generally, his novels take place in the future and are characterized by high-tech weapons systems employed to defeat a threat to U.S. national security.

While this newest book is a good read, at times all of the characters are hard to sort out. In the combat sequences, many times multiple viewpoints exist and at times it gets confusing: which ship is where and who is doing what. At points, the whole picture gets lost in Brown's attempt to provide a comprehensive view of the battle.

Dale Brown is a formerly decorated navigator-bombardier of the U.S. Air Force. He has previously written four best-selling novels.

By Darryl Berney
Emerald Contributor

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2. Persons with long-term heart or lung problems.
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