

EMF Drops the Fluff Act • Elvis Makes Beautiful Music Ice Cube Preys on Your Senses • Phish Stinks • Peel Stateside?

in B S I C

U. COLLEGE RADIO CHART

1. **Mudhoney**, *Piece of Cake*
2. **Tom Waits**, *Bone Machine*
3. **Jesus Lizard**, *Liar*
4. **Faith Healers**, *Lido*
5. **Sugar**, *Copper Blue*



6. **Beat Happening**, *You Turn Me On*
7. **King Missile**, *Happy Hour*
8. **Television**, *Television*
9. **Mummies**, *Never Been Caught*
10. **Sebadoh**, *Smash Your Head on the Punk Rocks*

Chart solely based on college radio airplay. Contributing radio stations: KASR, Arizona State U.; KEDG, California State U., Sacramento; KALX, U. of California, Berkeley; KLA, U. of California, Los Angeles; KUCB, U. of Colorado; WXDR, U. of Delaware; WXDU, Drexel U.; WUOG, U. of Georgia; WIUS, Indiana U.; WXJM, James Madison U.; WRFL, U. of Kentucky; WVUM, U. of Miami; WCBM, U. of Michigan; KCOU, U. of Missouri; WNYU, New York U.; WXYU, U. of North Carolina; KTRU, Rice U.; WIDR, Southern Illinois U.; KTSB, U. of Texas; WTUL, Tulane U.; WAKE, Wake Forest U.; KCMU, U. of Washington

Elvis Costello *The Juliet Letters*

★★★★

Elvis Costello's latest work of musical art, *The Juliet Letters*, rolls to a stop and the last long note hangs in the air. It is a beautiful thing.

Departing from his normal pop/new wave format, Costello has incorporated the string ensemble Brodsky Quartet to add a classical twist.

His Hipness mixes the beauty of stringed instruments with his deep, wavering voice to produce a melodic, hypnotic, dynamic and oh-so-haunting album.

This listening experience begins with "Deliver Us" in which Costello softly sings above a deep cello, crescendoing into a flurry of violins. He uses the beauty of classical instruments to benefit the mood of the song, reminiscent of "This Mortal Coil's Blood." Very cool.

In "I Almost Had a Weakness," Costello uses a fast, sharp violin, teasing the listener with his lilting voice. And the uplifting melody itself disguises the lyrics (and I burned the photographs of your wedding clothes; God they were ugly children), leaving a sarcastic grin on the serious music.

This album seduces you, taking you in to

spin amidst swirling violins and Costello's signature alternative (the original use of the word) style. A definite must for any musical library. ■ Kim McGee, *The Rebel Yell*, U. of Nevada, Las Vegas

Ice Cube *The Predator*

★★★

This new release from Ice Cube probably won't make it into Tipper Gore's collection of CDs, but *The Predator* is sure to garner Ice Cube the one thing he seems so good at attracting—attention.

Much like he has on past recordings, Ice Cube makes liberal use of racial slurs and violent descriptions, earning a parental advisory for his album. And if you can get around his less-than-poetic justification for violence ("We had to tear the motherfucker up"), you'll find that *Predator* is fairly representative of Cube's previous work—a gut-wrenching voice for rap with demanding, energetic background rhythms.

His message on this album is as powerfully in-your-face as all his others. "I do want the white man to understand... To see that what he did in the past is still affecting us now." Taken with the mesmerizing jam that gives

these words life, Ice Cube has concocted a set of rap tunes as passionate and frustrating as the voice that carries them.

Hunt this one down. ■ Brett Barrouquere, *The Nicholls Worth*, Nicholls State U.

Phish *Rift*

★★

You can't say it any clearer than this—the newest catch from Phish is not fit for consumption.

The band's trademark eclectic style backfires into a montage of 13 random, often mismatched pieces called *Rift*, which drowns in one too many genres of thumping musical style, despite the group's obvious musical talent.

"Sparkle," the band's meager attempt at something, is a country-western nightmare straight from *Hee-Haw*, complete with twangy guitar. And "Weigh" sounds like an episode from *They Might Be Giants* meets alternative jazz. Many of the songs such as "Rift" and "Fast Enough For You" start out with enticing, bluesy rhythms, only to turn into Olivia Newton John-ish reprises. It's a problem typical of the album.

But Phish's most prominent red herring lies in its singing ability... or lack thereof. At best the group sounds like a weak version of Simon and Garfunkel.

At worst, Phish sounds like a recording from *Sesame Street Live* with synthetic-sounding harmonies and impossibly stupid and repetitive lyrics.

The only saving grace for the group is its talent for musical solos. At least half the songs on the album contain 30-second snippets of some of the jazziest guitar and piano solos outside New York, the band's specialty.

Having come off a raging summer tour with *Blues Traveler* and *Spin Doctors*, you'd think Phish might have learned something about quality music. Obviously not. Throw this one back. ■ Nicole Cobban, *The Bucknellian*, Bucknell U.

in the studio

Following up his album-length nod (yawn) to Beatle-esque pop hooks, **Robyn Hitchcock** finally has settled into the mature groove for which long-time fans have been waiting. His new, as yet untitled LP has Hitchcock flexing his introspective muscle and turning off the amps for the first acoustic album with *The Egyptians*. Release date is Feb. 23.



A mature Robyn?

They're heavy, angry and want nothing to do with Seattle. With only two seven-inch singles to its name, college radio darling, **Paw**, is in the midst of recording its debut album, set for unleashing in early 1993.

Thank the retro muse—word is Chicago's **Urge Overkill** is recording its major label debut somewhere on the Eastern Seaboard. Catch the fever in April.

Big Head Todd and the Monsters is Boulder's latest success story. With two independently produced albums behind them and an enviable nationwide buzz, their intelligent brand of folk rock has found its stomping ground on the beautiful *Sister Sweetie*, due out in fall 1993.

The ground-breaking **Peel Sessions** stateside? That's right. Since 1967 legendary British DJ John Peel's radio program has given promising new bands a chance to bust a move on the big time. Starting this fall, Peel is widening distribution to include the U.S. stations he deems worthy. You heard it here. ■ John Coppitt, *Middlebury Campus*, Middlebury College

on the road

A brief look at January/February concert listings

Spin Doctors: Tablequah, OK, 1/26; Kansas City, MO, 1/27; Dallas, TX, 1/29; Tempe, AZ, 2/1; Los Angeles, CA, 2/3-4; San Francisco, CA, 2/5-6
Black Crowes: Little Rock, AR, 2/5; Houston, TX, 2/6; Austin, TX, 2/7; Shreveport, LA, 2/8; Oklahoma City, OK, 2/10; Tulsa, OK, 2/11; Wichita, KS, 2/12; Des Moines, IA, 2/13; Madison, WI, 2/15; Rockford, IL, 2/16; Kalamazoo, MI, 2/18; Lansing, MI, 2/19; Davenport, IA, 2/20; Normal, IL, 2/22
Buckwheat Zydeco: Denver, CO, 2/5; Boulder, CO, 2/6; Steamboat Springs, CO, 2/8; Kansas City, MO, 2/12-13; Madison, WI, 2/17; Minneapolis, MN, 2/18; Marquette, MI, 2/19; Glen Ellyn, IL, 2/20
Suzanne Vega & Kitchens of Distinction: Vancouver, BC, 2/10; Portland, OR, 2/11; San Francisco, CA, 2/13; Ventura, CA, 2/14; San Juan Capistrano, CA, 2/16-17; Los Angeles, CA, 2/18-19; Phoenix, AZ, 2/20; San Diego, CA, 2/22; Las Vegas, NV, 2/23; Salt Lake City, UT, 2/25

quotable

"We wanted to put the dramatic music of Led Zepplin to the beauty of the lyrics of 'Saturday Night Fever.'"

—Gary B.L.B., front man for Dread Zepplin