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#### COLIND OFF



# ALONE

GROUP: Crowded House LABEL: Capitol

bo wants to hear a bunch of middle-age men singing pop music?
Well, the folks in Crowded House are doing just that ... brilliantly. They are restoring an aura of respectability to pop music. With soaring harmonies and catchy lyrics, this band has successfully kept its distinctive style throughout the past decade.

Reaching a bit of prominence with songs that virtually everyone has heard, such as "Better Be Home Soon" and "Don't Dream It's Over," they put many pop musicians to shame.

Don't be disappointed if you are unfamiliar with them. For some odd reason, they have failed to gain broad support in the United States. They have developed a much better reception in Australia, Great Britain and their homeland of New Zealand. This trend was clearly reflected with their latest effort: their new album was released in the U.K. and Australia weeks before it reached the States.

As in past endeavors, Together Alone contains thoughtful lyrics and driving, melodic guitars. They have also maintained the rare talent to make songs that could be sung around a campfire, in a stadium, and in a velour-saturated piano lounge. Describing them as versatile understates their talents.

This album is more similar to their earlier efforts, incorporating the same the same type of ballads and cacophonic distortions adored by their fans. This album has also drawn a few comparisons with U2, suggesting that some songs from Together Alone resemble "The Fly" or "Lady With the Spinning Head."

Also, the addition of a new guitarist and keyboard player, Mark Hart, has given Crowded House a layered effect to compliment their talents. Following in the footsteps of Australian legends, Midnight Oil, they have also skillfully utilized a Maori chorus on a few songs to add a distinctive and haunting touch to the album.

So, even though they are as old as your parents, they still know how to make a good album

> - JASON PRIMUTH For the Oregon Daily Emerald

## QUICK PICKS

#### PICKS

UNSANE—Total Destruction (Matador/Atlantic) 3 stars. If you consider that Helmet is a certain degree harder then say, Love Battery, then Unsane is that same degree harder then Helmet. The guitar stands out the least, which makes for an interesting rhythm-driven recording. Vocals from the pit of hell.

PRONG-Cleansing (Epic) 3 1/2 stars. Heavy thrash and industrial delivered crisp and crunchy. Repeated listening may give you a Slurpee-like headache; ohh, the pleasure, the pain. I'd like to see more industrial remixes like this.

HUGGY BEAR – Talking (Kill Rock Stars) 3 stars. Interesting! A British riot grrrl group with a guy singing half of the vocals. Punk with a bit of U.K. weirdness thrown in. 10 inch viny!

GOD IS MY CO-PILOT—
Tight Like Fist (Knitting Factory)
3 stars. Avant-garde group
playing live at Knitting Factory
in New York over the course of
a year with almost 30 different
musicians rotating through the
band. Similar combo of
pop/punk and lo-fi weirdness.
THINKING FELLERS UNION
LOCAL 282-Admonishing the
Bishops (Matador) 3 1/2 stars.
This u songer has lyrics that
match the mood of the music
better then almost anything

you've heard in the last year.

Check out thier full length if you've got the change in your pocket.

#### PANS

HERETIX – The Adventures of Superdevil (Cherry Disc) 2 stars. Heard it a million times. Sounds like every new major lavel alternative band your've heard before, only these guys are on an indie. If you have trouble finding this disc wait about a year and they'll probably be on Sony.

SCREAM –Fumble and Banging the Drum (Dischord) 1 star. Hey, it's Dave Ghrol from Nirvana drumming in his old band! Guess what, it sucks. Actually this double album rerelease does have a couple of good tracks, but most of it is wose then the Heretix. At least it doesn't cost much (hey it's on Dischord).

**GNOME**-Fiberglass (C/Z) 2 stars. Somewhere between Best Kissers In The World and the above-mentioned Heretix. This isn't a slag on the band, its just been done sooooo many times

THE MARATHONS—Peanut Butter 0 stars. I'm not really going to give this a review, but instead I;d like to take a moment to say that Pat Malach is a creampuff yogurthead.

> -SCOTT DREW Music Director KWVA



### WHAT USE TO BE

GROUP: Gift LABEL: Tim Kerr Records

efore you go out and look for this in the CD rack at your favorite record store, hold up. This is a seven-inch single. That's right, the *Emerald* is reviewing vinyl!

I usually don't review singles because I realize the interest in them is small, but I'm reviewing this Gift's "What Used to Be" because 1. Gift is from Portland, 2. Two of the members were members of the now-defunct punk band Poison Idea, and 3. It kicks my ass.

I luva, luva, luva punk pop,

and if you do too, this record is a necessity to your collection. It may even warrant going out and buying a \$15 turntable at Goodwill.

Jerry A. (guitars/vocals), Thee Slayer Hippy (drums) used to play in with the punk icon Poison Idea, butthe band split up last year, they picked up May May Del Castro and promptly put out this single.

The song follows the beloved verse-bridge-chorus format and will probably stick as one of my favorite songs of 1994. I hope Gift puts out a full-length CD soon, that way the masses without turntables will be able to enjoy the classic crunch of this band.

- DAVE CHARBONNEAU



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