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QUICK



Soup Dragons down to one

Hydrophonic, the new Soup Dragons album, has just been released. Sean Dickson, the founder of the band, faced some difficulties as he wrote and demoed the songs for it, though. The other three members of The Soup Dragons decided to leave the band.

Because the album was already written, Dickson didn't let that stop him. "I returned to recording with a new sense of freedom that I was fully able to explore," Dickson said. "I didn't go into the studio with any preconceived notions. I let the songs dictate how I did them."

Several musicians helped Dickson, including Lynval Golding and Neville Staples of the The Specials and Tina Weymouth of Talking Heads. Dickson ended up playing just about all the instruments at some time, except the drums.

Poetry contest taking entries

The National College Poetry Contest is open to all University students desiring to have their poetry anthologized. Cash prizes will be awarded for the top five poems.

The deadline is Oct. 31. For contest rules send a self-addressed stamped envelope to International Publications, P.O. Box 44044-L, Los Angeles, CA 90044.

MUSIC

R.E.M. changes its tune with 'Monster'

The ultimate pop band has decided to try some new things, and in doing so they have created a "monster." The new album from R.E.M. is different from many of the band's past releases, maybe because they turned their guitars "on" and moved away from the folk sound that had become a trademark of their music.

This album deviates from that mold, breaking it and stomping it with clawed feet.

After listening to the CD, I was impressed with the change of sound. Of course, with the recent changes in listening styles and the explosion of new music people are listening to, this album may show the group's ability to adjust, yet not conform or relinquish its own distinct sound. It is definitely R.E.M., although at times, I was not entirely sure.

A few of the songs, such as "Strange Currencies," definitely resonate R.E.M., and I could hear traces of older songs intertwined into them. The songs I liked best off *Monster* were "Crush With Eyeliner" and "King of Comedy." The latter has some great guitar work and odd, but interesting, words if you really listen to them. The former, well, you just have to hear it to appreciate it.



Monster
R.E.M.

★★★★

In a recent press story the new album was described as "rock 'n' roll, but not like some old R.E.M. fans may remember it. The chiming, folk rock sounds of their earlier albums is gone, left to such bands as the Gin Blossoms to mine."

I would have to agree. The folk songs are gone, and rock and roll predominates. The folksy *Out of Time* is definitely way in the past. It seems that this album may have been an experiment for the band, one it truly had fun with.

Some food for thought about the new album from a press story: "A lot of the hard-core fans have said, 'Quit playing these wimpy things. Play some rock songs and tour.'"

Monster doesn't contain those folk songs from past R.E.M. accomplishments. It is rock and roll. For long-time fans, this album should be something to enjoy; for anyone else, it is a good album to listen to.

— CHRIS FOX
Oregon Daily Emerald

Husker Du drummer finds success with Mob

Forever to be known as ex-Husker Du drummer, Grant Hart pulls his current band Nova Mob out of the ruins of the sometimes unforgiving Minneapolis club scene with its latest, self-titled release.

While Hart's thumping, Mitch Mitchell-style of drumming is what powered his former band to fame, he now plays guitar and continues to improve, as evidenced on this more polished release.

All else aside, it is Hart's uniquely sour vocals that make the difference in this otherwise average band.

Nova Mob powers through a wide array of post-punk pop licks. The highlights are "Old Empire" and "Shoot Your Way to Freedom."

Hart and Co. waver through the rest of their second release, with an assortment of slowed-down songs that take a different turn for a band that has struggled to find its niche in the aftermath of the Minneapolis post-Replacements sound.

"The Sins of Their Sons" is a direct assault on the true Nova Mob fan (a small faction at that). "We got



Nova Mob
Nova Mob

★★★

the beat"-style drums and Hart's inspired guitar work on the disc result in an impressive cut.

Hart is at his best on the higher-intensity songs, of which there are too

few of in the Nova Mob catalog. "Little Miss Information" rediscovers Hart's vocal magic noticeably.

Nova Mob should help lengthen the Mob's seemingly fading existence as a band and credible alternative to Hart's former bandmate Bob Mould's latest release with Sugar. Undoubtedly, there exists a rivalry between the two, with Mould getting the upper hand more often. But Hart successfully fires back, utilizing his greatest asset, his soulful howling, to produce one of the better releases out today.

— CHRIS METZ
Oregon Daily Emerald

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