

Rock

BY CARRIE BELL

Pocket Band



Battershell

In the land of Popopia, mountains are made of marmalade, the Princess of Spit wishes Prince Popo a happy birthday and Battershell's music fills the air.

"Popopia is my own reality of fantasy and frolic," vocalist Tammy Lynn says. "My dream is for the whole world to freak out about our music and live in Popopia. Then I want to die as a legend."

These goals don't seem so lofty considering how hard Battershell works at its labor of love. And it doesn't hurt that Zoo Records signed them either. Tammy Lynn, drummer Charlie Lauth and bassist Jamie Baker met two years ago when all were gigging with New York bands that "just weren't working."

"This is the coolest band I've been in, although I'm very aware of my penis," lone man Lauth says. "We share a vision of writing good music. We long for fame, bigger checks, better equipment and bigger audiences."

Judging by their debut, *Sunshine In Popopia*, they prefer doing things the old-fashioned way. Stickers and fliers beckon new fans. Nonstop practice makes the poppy love punk perfect, and tiny clubs are like second homes.

"My motivation is comparing myself to The Beatles, the best f—king band ever," Tammy Lynn says. "I put them on and realize there's always room for improvement. If you compare yourself to God, you'll make a good disciple."

Rating System



Lori Carson *Everything I Touch Runs Wild* Restless



ABRUSH ON A SNARE DRUM, FLUTTERING cellos, portraits painted with poetic lyrics and a soft voice — it's subtle things that make Lori Carson drift toward perfection in a vast sea of morose singer/songwriters.

From her New York folk roots to a two-CD career as the voice for the electronic-texture



everything i touch runs wild

lori carson

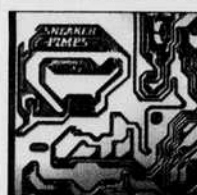
freaks, the Golden Palominos, Carson engages listeners to come closer and lose themselves in the seductive atmospherics and liquid arrangements.

The album was recorded in the chanteuse's apartment, giving it an intimate, imperfect feel. Her fragile voice wavers between low-key confidence and crushed self-esteem. She avoids hitting you over the head with messages, opting instead for a sneak-it-in strategy. "Snow Come Down" melts icicles on the coldest of hearts, whereas "Something's Got Me" leaves pop fans reeling.

Carson may not provide answers to what ails you, but she makes good company for misery.



Star 69 *Eating February* Radioactive



Sneaker Pimps *Becoming X* Clean Up/Virgin



Guitar-driven Britpop has come in many forms lately (read: Sleeper, Garbage, Lush, Elastica, Ash, etc.). Following formula are newcomers Star 69, who have already received critical accolades in the UK.

This debut is peppered with Bush-esque guitar riffs, grrrl vocals and dreamy melodies. "Burning Down The House" sways along at a hypnotic pace, while "I'm Insane" personifies biting emotion. Although they aren't major ground breakers, Star 69 give you enough reason to keep calling back.

Britpop's sister movement is the infamous world of trip-hop made popular by the likes of Tricky,

Ruby and Portishead. Next on the scene are Sneaker Pimps, whose selling points are Kelli Dayton's sensual voice and overall eeriness.

In this collage of crunchy chords, techno pulses, languid beats and orchestral backdrops, you'll find an unsettling nirvana. These Pimps are more treat than trick.



The Hi-Fives *And a Whole Lotta You!* Lookout



Don't let the three-button suits, wing tips or straight-ahead rock rants fool you into thinking Berkeley's Hi-Fives are a modern incarnation of Tom Hanks' fantasy band, the Wonders.

That thing they do so well is avoid the sophomore jinx by intertwining the mod '60s singer-as-center mentality with the voracious energy of punk. The beat-punk sound is uncomplicated, honest and fun — it tempts even two left feet to dance this mess around.

For retro fans, there are covers of Yaz's "Bad Connection" and Soft Cell's flagship single,

RADIO, RADIO

1. Wilco, *Being There*, Reprise
2. Johnny Cash, *Unchained*, American
3. Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, *Now I Got Worry*, Matador
4. Tricky, *Pre-Millennium Tension*, Island
5. Guided By Voices, *Sunfish Holy Breakfast*, Matador
6. Various Artists, *Incursions In Illbient*, Asphodel
7. DJ Shadow, *Entroducing...*, Mowax
8. Spacemen 3, *Live 1988*, Taang!
9. Heatmiser, *Mic City Sons*, Caroline
10. Yo-Yo A Go-Go, *Anthology*, Yo-Yo Studios

Chart based solely on college radio play. Contributing radio stations: KALX, U. of California, Berkeley; KCMU, U. of Washington; KCR, California State U., San Diego; KCSB, U. of California, Santa Barbara; KFSR, California State U., Fresno; KRNU, U. of Nebraska, Lincoln; KTRU, Rice U., Texas; KVRX, U. of Texas, Austin; KWVA, U. of Oregon, Eugene; WCBN, U. of Michigan; WMSV, Mississippi State U.; WNYU, New York U.; WXJM, James Madison U., Va.

Get the groove on U.'s music page:
<http://www.umagazine.com/rocks>

"Tainted Love." "Shh!" could pass for the opening credits of next season's TV spy show. The no-holds-barred pop assault continues with 13 other original tunes.

Move over Green Day, here comes something meatier in the East Bay.



Brigid Boden *Brigid Boden* A&M Records



With the luck of the Irish as well as raw talent on her side, Dublin native Brigid Boden might as well dance the celebratory jig early. Her fusion of hip-hop, reggae, dance and traditional Irish folk music is refreshing until you get bored by the repetition. Fiddles, Gaelic pipes and tin whistles abound, while mesmerizing beats keep toes tapping.

Her poignant lyrics read like well-written prose, while her sweet siren voice resonates in your eardrums. Help comes in the form of ex-Chieftains lilter (the Irish method of scatting) Pat Kilduff and throaty rapper JC 001.

It's Enya for cool-kid club hoppers.

Our Picks



Various Artists *The Sugarhill Records Story* Rhino

Calling all young MCs to a five-CD box set that chronicles the roots of your labor. Sugar Hill Gang, Grandmaster Flash, Spoonie Gee and the rest of the gang turned rap into a commercial commodity. Sure to be a rap fan's delight with nasty bass lines and old-school rhymes. And that's the straight dope.

Frédéric Chopin *Chopin For Dummies* Angel/EMI

Think arpeggio is fancy lettuce? Billy Joel your only piano man? This greatest hits of the romantic virtuoso, one in a 24-artist series, will turn even the most untrained ear into a fan and doubles as a CD-ROM. Includes 12 of the most popular études, nocturnes and ballades. And at \$9.99, the price is Verdi good.

Huey Lewis & The News *Time Flies — The Best of Elektra*

Want a new drug? Try the compilation that really is the "heart of rock and roll" (as long as you steer clear of the

new tracks these rock studs try to sneak past you). Deny it if you will, but you'll find yourself singing along to every single word.

Horny Toad *Thirteen Domo*

This trio hopes to be next in a long line of famous rock amphibians like Bullfrog Jeremiah and Toad the Wet Sprocket. You'll be skankin' to the Latin, punk-flavored beats of this nonstop dance party in no time.

The Moon Seven Times *Sunburnt Roadrunner*

Acoustic alchemy runs rampant on this ethereal collection of moody music from the Illinois quartet. Lynn Canfield

purrs with the purity of a cherub while the band fills space with unobtrusive yet soulful accompaniment.

Paul Broadnax *Here's to Joe Brownstone*

Nat King Cole-ish singer Paul Broadnax jazzes it up in a tribute to legendary vocalist Joe Williams. Best for Sunday morning brunch on the patio because of the cool lounge tone and smooth assortment of horn, strings and piano solos.

Nothing like hot chocolate and good music to heat up a cold winter's night. These are the chosen few CDs the assistant editors think are better than last month's fuzzy new Totes.