

Björk involves fans in making new CD

CD review

Jacquelyn Lewis
Pulse Editor

It's no revelation that Björk has a penchant for the bizarre, and her "Greatest Hits" album screams it from the rooftops.

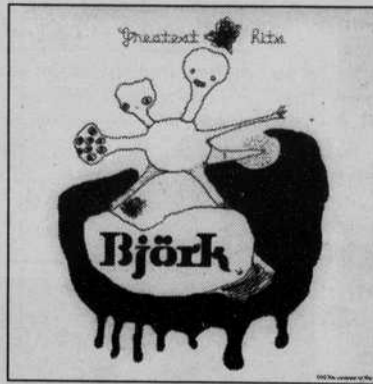
But perhaps the sound is not so much bizarre as it is just plain original. There is absolutely nothing else like it out there. Björk fans know there's no other sound that can satisfy them when they're jonesing for her eclectic Icelandic grooves.

"Greatest Hits" has a patchwork feel that makes it an ideal introductory album for anyone not familiar with Björk's music, and the collection of old favorites will surely appeal to tried-and-true followers.

The album draws listeners in because the fans themselves actually chose what tracks were included — save for the one new song, "It's in our hands." Björk conducted two fan polls on her Web site, www.bjork.com, back in May. The poll included all of her released singles, allowing the listeners (Björk called them "experienced experts") to choose the album's content.

The result? A collection of 14 of the finest tracks from Björk's repertoire, plus one. The song "Hyperballad" received top honors, and listeners chose wisely. The fourth single from the 1996 album, "Post," this selection is a perfect example of why we all love the pixie-like performer. Her superb vocal talent melds with clever, symbolic lyrics about relationships — a topic we can all relate to — and an interesting musical arrangement.

The CD includes other favorites, such as the sweet-but-sarcastic "All is full of love" (though not the original version), as well as "Pagan



poetry," from her album "Vespertine." "Pagan poetry" is interesting because Björk worked with music boxes to find inspiration, and the addition of these sounds makes for a creepy, ethereal sound.

"It's in our hands" makes its album debut on "Greatest Hits," but it has been around for a while — cleverly alluding to Sept. 11, the song has been a favorite at Björk's "Vespertine" concerts.

The only big surprise is that there only sparse liner notes with this CD, the leaflet a collection of perplexing drawings — contorted phallic symbols, it appears — by Gabriela Fridriksdottir and M/M. Leave it to Björk to include an addition such as this; there's always a strange quirk to make fans tilt their heads and squint their eyes. These odd little "gifts" also grace the Björk Web site.

"Greatest Hits" was released on Nov. 4 alongside another collection, "Family Tree," which is a six-CD set spanning Björk's entire career, including her pre-solo days. If you're in the market for a new CD, depending on how much you cash you're willing to part with, both are excellent choices.

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continued from page 5

guy talk and taking a good look at his appearance, I find it highly suspect that his phallus could intoxicate any woman.

Examples of culture gone bad abound on MTV2, and listing all that's wrong with it only gives those stupid ideas another play. Attempting to censor any offensive material is never the right answer, but something should be

done to stop rewarding ignorance. In many cultures, music has a much more religious, communal significance. Why are we allowing such important piece of our community to be taken over and turned into a breeding ground for negative emotions and social ills? Music is a powerful, important piece of a society, and it's time that someone reached beyond and made something bigger with it.

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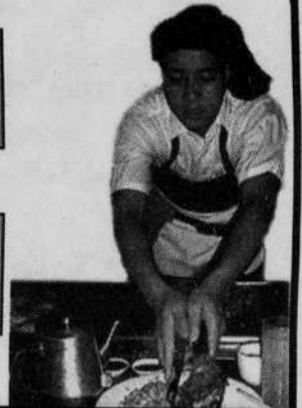
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