Post-Sept. 11 America, Creed inspire recent albums

CD review

Ryan Nyburg Pulse Columnist

Time to clean out the ol' collection of music albums from the past few months. You can't say the music industry hasn't been eclectic this year, so let's have a listen at some of the good, bad and bland among the recent releases.

First off is the debut from Socialburn, "Where You Are." Here's an idea, kids. Start a band, give it a one-word name, learn some decent but uninteresting chops, write songs with names like "The Pain Inside" or "She Left Me, Now I Want to Stick My Head in the Oven" and alternate between melodious singing and heavy metal grunts and you to can be a top-40 rock radio success. Socialburn follows this advice to a tee. These guitar-heavy trend-riders are another creation from the Nickleback factory.

Teen angst as a marketing tool has to be one of the most disgusting social aberration since they started using sex to sell clothing. What personal neurosis will they sing about next, existentialist dread? Damn you, Nirvana.

If Socialburn lead singer Neil Alday's life has as much suffering as these songs express, he should get some serious therapy rather than sharing it with us. This band will probably end up with the same amount of cultural value as Seven Mary Three, whom it actually thanks in the liner notes, believe it or not.

Next up is the latest from Longwave, called "The Strangest Things." This fits the Radiohead mold instead of the Creed mold, so I guess it's a move up. The general idea seems to be a diluted version of My Bloody Valentine, stripped of the over-amped guitars and leaving only some feedback and pop melodies.

The question that this album poses is whether this is experimental music held back by an overdependence on pop hooks, or if it's pop music with the occasional experimental touch thrown in to give it some validity. Neither viewpoint makes it look all that great. Not an astounding album, but not a totally wasted effort.

Now to completely change directions. Singer/songwriter Jess Grant brings us "Washington Waltz," a nice little bit of folk rock from up in Seattle. Grant seems to remember something that many a coffeehouse twit with a guitar has forgotten: Good song writing counts for a lot and can often compensate for other failings.

Grant's lyricism is good, and his songs are often funny, containing the intelligence and wit so often missing from most modern music. While the album never seems to mesh into anything great, it's a worthy effort nonetheless.

Last on the list, and best of the bunch, is Eric Idle's "The Rutland Isles." Here, Idle revives the toolong-dead style of the comedy record in the form of a travelogue, documenting the fictional island nation of the title.

An ongoing stream of songs, skits, spoofs and vignettes, the album touches on so many bases you often



forget its supposed focus. The comedy is often raunchy, often stupid and often dead-on satire. The island of Paranoia (motto: "Look out behind you") sounds suspiciously like post-9/11 America.

Its national anthem includes lines like "We're much better than you are / We're much bigger than you." Religion doesn't escape Idle's mockery, with songs like "Killing for God," and a description of how Courtesy

bishops are trained to handle media criticism (hint: small-arms fire). Much like Idle's post-Monty Python career, the album is often hit and miss, but what hits makes the whole thing worthwhile.

Let's hope for a more consistent level of quality in our music over the next few months — probably not likely, but one can dream.

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Found

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Rothbart said.

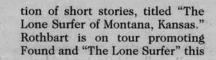
These days, readers send Rothbart more than just notes. Recently, he received a dead frog from a finder in Chicago. Rothbart included the animal, flattened and covered with lint, in Found's second edition. The frog is still lurking somewhere in one of the many boxes crowding Rothbart's home.

"It was pretty gross," he said. "It still sends a little chill up my spine. I have no idea where that thing is now."

Rothbart doesn't want to open anymore dead animals, but he said he hopes people will continue to send him their discoveries.

"For people to really respond, it feels good," he said. "It was a sort of stunning, overwhelming and unpredictable, but I feel like it's worth honoring. I'm learning that it does seem to really affect and touch people in ways I would have never seen or imagined."

Rothbart plans to publish a Found book in the near future, and he has just finished writing a collec-



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> Davy Rothbart Found Magazine creator

month, and he will stop in Eugene at Sam Bond's Garage at 9 p.m. on June 12. Rothbart will travel with musician and brother Peter, as well as Virginia folk darling Devon Sproule, both of whom will perform at the show.

Visit www.foundmagazine.com for more information, and send your finds to Found Magazine, 3455 Charing Cross Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48108-1911.

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PSY 330	Thinking	Arrow, H.	42485	154 Straub
PSY 375	Development	Measelle, J.	42486	216 Allen
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paper with some amazing patterns that would look incredible in a



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glossier paper so they would look more like prints. Total cost: \$1.68. I put my prints in gold frames that I found at several thrift stores. I'm fully convinced that one almost never needs to buy new household items. I found five nice frames of various sizes, all in good condition, for about \$3.

The whole project took a couple of hours and cost less than \$5. It looks polished, and the idea is applicable to any design. I found a few books on the history of wallmore colorful room. The process was cheap, easy and resulted in unique art that's far from standard college decor.

My new art hangs above my bed. I've never gone for the whole Goth thing, but I think the insect/lace combination is charming. It's very Victorian, Edward Gorey, "Arsenic and Lace," a strange union of lovely and macabre.

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