

AURAL GRATIFICATION

Must haves for '94

Three views on what to play when you reminisce about the year in music

by Aaron Bong

1. OPUS III

Guru Mother

High-energy, not quite in-your-face vibes that tickle your dance bone just right. The ethereal sounds with heavy bass and a soaring, beautiful voice singing inspired lyrics made this CD my favorite pick for 1994.

2. NINE INCH NAILS

The Downward Spiral

OK, honestly, I know some people who use this album to get "in the mood." Trent Reznor has been a favorite of mine for quite some time. (Thank you, Bryan D., for introducing me to him). As long as NIN keeps it up—with this sound I mean—I will look forward to every new album it produces.

3. DEE-LITE

Dewdrops In the Garden



I have to say that the concert was more than just a little bit disappointing, especially since several of the band members were just a little too much "out there" to give a good performance. Obviously the band is much more "down to earth" in the studio, and it shows. This CD brings Dee-Lite to a new "height" in the evolution it is forcing onto dance music.

4. ERASURE

I Say, I Say, I Say

What can I say? Clarke and Bell are two of my favorite musicians. But *I Say* is more than a little repetitive. It sounds like one long song with breaks in between. The band was redeemed when some excellent dance tracks came off of this album.

5. PET SHOP BOYS

Disco 2



Neil Tennant

I waited eagerly with bated breath for this little treasure. I would recommend spending the extra dollar or two to purchase the limited edition two-

CD release for the extra six tracks. One of the nice features is that the songs on the first disc are all remixed into an hour-long uninterrupted dance session.

6. MELISSA ETHERIDGE

Yes I Am

The Advocate called her "rock's great dyke hope." I would tend to call her one of rock's great hopes, period. Melissa is talented and keeps moving up the charts like nobody's business. Keep up the great work.

7. BARBRA STREISAND

The Concert

Properly subtitled "For My Boys."

After not doing concerts for so long, and then only a few in selected cities (what about Portland next time?), Barbra allowed her ardent yet absent fans to "listen in" on the concert with this CD. A real treat for the inveterate Barbra fan.

8. ENIGMA

The Cross of Changes

Enigma's second, eagerly awaited album was well worth the wait. Lush tracks, beautiful vocals, and inspirational melodies that keep on keepin' on.

9. VARIOUS ARTISTS

(Soundtrack) *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*



There is just something about these songs, and the movie, that has inspired some people to recently try doing drag. A friend of mine predicts that Priscilla will become the next Rocky Horror. Quite possible with a fun, fabulous movie and music that takes you places.

10. TORI AMOS

Under the Pink

If you missed Tori when she came through Portland, you missed a great concert. She was splendid. This album is moving—full of lyrics that aren't too cryptic and piano work that comes through every time. Concert-goers were treated with her version of Prince's "Purple Rain."

11. DES'REE

I Ain't Movin'

Watching Des'ree in concert was incredible. She worked the audience like a healer, showering



us with her voice and throwing loads of positive energy to the audience. That feeling comes across vibrantly on her CD.

She turned 26 the day she was in Portland, which I hope only signals the beginning of a long and distinguished career.

12. GREEN DAY

Dookie

Whoever said punk is dead hasn't heard Green Day. The only thing the band seems to take seriously is its music, and sometimes even that gets made fun of. Billy Joe is one of the cutest punk rockers currently on the scene (and one of the most talented). Especially his Yank-trying-to-look-like-an-Englishman-trying-to-look-like-an-Yank-punk-rocker look. And wow, what a mud fight at Woodstock '94!

13. MADONNA

Bedtime Stories

Madonna is a gay male icon. Duh.

For many of the younger half of our community she is something that represents eroticism to an extreme. However, she promised that this album would have no references to sex in any way. What?! Madonna divorced from sex? Well, *Bedtime Stories* is her most mature sound to date. A real "classy" album. And I'm not just saying that to be "neat."

14. THE CRANBERRIES

No Need to Argue

Last August I chose between seeing The Cranberries for \$3, or going out with a friend. I wish I had gone to see The Cranberries. Oh well, they came through last December with Duran Duran, and I got to see them then.

This album is flawless. I love British R&B, with the heavy bass and drums. And this CD is a testament to the fact that The Cranberries are not one-hit wonders.

15. HOLE

Live Through This

All right, so maybe few people had heard of Courtney Love before Kurt Cobain. Some said she was using Kurt's name to put out her album and promote her own band. As far as I can tell from this album, these people are wrong. She sounds fresh, energetic and innovative. She is an excellent musician in her own right.

16. THE GO-GO'S

Return to the Valley of The Go-Go's

Along with Blondie and The Bangles, The Go-Go's were some of the best women rockers from the '80s. And what a comeback CD.

17. REAL MCCOY

Real McCoy (As yet unreleased)

Already, two hit dance singles off of this album make it one of my picks—aural unheard, so to speak. Real McCoy promises to be something great.

18. NIRVANA

Unplugged in New York

This was the last full-length album recorded by Kurt before he died. The songs are played acoustically, in the "Unplugged" fashion.

19. SHERYL CROW

Tuesday Night Music Club

Hey, you can't go wrong if you have The Flying Elvises in your first video. And with *Leaving Las Vegas*, Sheryl Crow stepped up to the platform of innovative women rockers.

20. LUSCIOUS JACKSON

Natural Ingredients

Does everyone know yet that Kate Schellenbach, the drummer for Luscious Jackson and formerly drummer for the Beastie Boys, is dating Josephine Wiggs, the bassist for The Breeders? If not, you must have been living in a vacuum.

The women of Luscious Jackson are giving all of the boys of hip hop a run for their fans. *Natural Ingredients* is a wonderful piece of music; it's worth looking for.

Rachel Gay C. Ehora's Top 5

1. ME'SHELL NDEGÉOCELLO

Plantation Lullabies

2. BEASTIE BOYS

Ill Communication

3. SARAH McLACHLAN

Fumbling Towards Ecstasy

4. OFFSPRING

Smash

5. SALT-N-PEPA

Very Necessary

Rupert Kinnard's Top 5

1. THE TEMPTATIONS

Emperors of Soul



2. SMOKEY ROBINSON & THE MIRACLES

The 35th Anniversary Collection

3. PRINCE

The Collection

4. VARIOUS ARTISTS

Country, Rhythm and Blues

5. VARIOUS ARTISTS

Salute to Curtis Mayfield