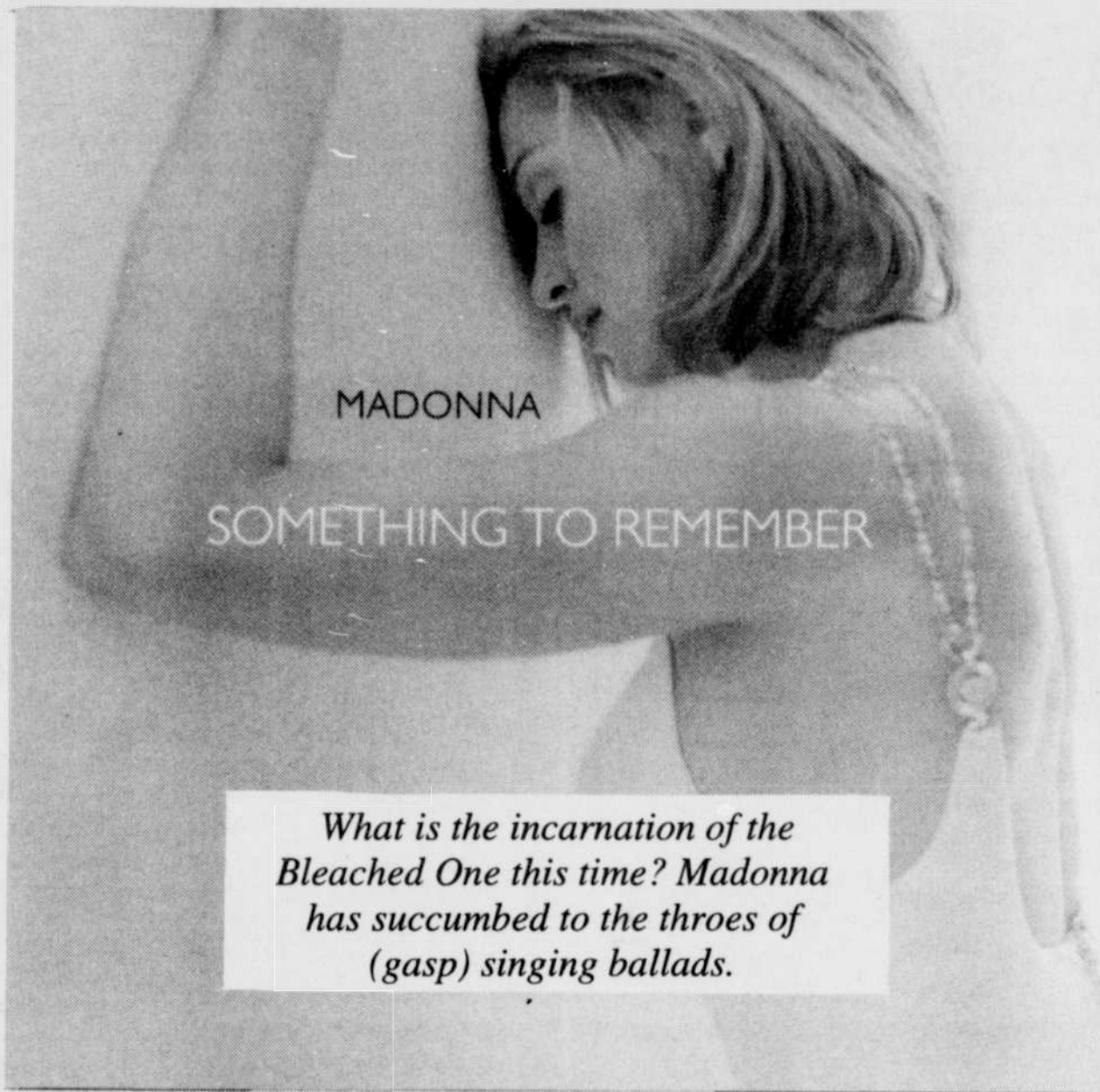


TONGUE IN GROOVE



MADONNA

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

What is the incarnation of the Bleached One this time? Madonna has succumbed to the throes of (gasp) singing ballads.

MADONNA
Something to Remember • Maverick/Warner Bros.

Hmmm, what is the incarnation of the Bleached One this time? We've done the '80s-pop-queen/dance-diva routine, right? The early '90s was the era to bare—as in, “Hi, my name is Madonna, would you like to see my (fill in your favorite usually clothed body part)?” Now the Wild One has succumbed to the throes of (gasp) singing ballads. The three pages of media information that come with the promo CD *really* want us to believe that, yes, Madonna is actually a balladeer at heart.

Admittedly, I've always felt that “Crazy for You” and “Live to Tell” (both included in this collection) were nice songs in a bittersweet sort of

Music

way. What was noticeable on this CD is that—besides the aforementioned tracks—everything else (mostly her newer stuff) sounded, well, the same. It's the echo-ey vocals with a drum-machine-and-bass beat accompanied by some sort of a keyboard concoction that somehow leaves me with a not-so-fresh feeling. I wonder what's next: Madonna the rapper? Yikes!

LOREENA MCKENNITT
A Winter Garden: Five Songs of the Season • Warner Bros.

It seems like I've died and gone straight (er, queer?) to hell—where the only thing they play on the infernal stereo is Loreena McKennitt's *Five Songs*. The devils are dancing about, wielding their Celtic drums, mocking me as I sit in anguish while the lyrics of “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen” ring over and over again in my throbbing ears. If someone asked me to buy this OK—in that Gen X, “fruit” cola, let's-be-hip advertising kinda way—CD: my reply? “When hell freezes over.”



JOY ELECTRIC
Five Stars for Failure • Tooth and Nail

There are times when you can tell whether a CD is going to be good simply by the record label that puts it out. This has been the case with the Tooth and Nail products that have entered my disc player. Having listened to quite a few bands on this Seattle label during the past few months, I wasn't surprised that Joy Electric almost instantly sent jolts of energetic weird funkiness to every nook and cranny of my tiny Asian bod. The brainchild of an obviously deliciously disturbed Ronnie Martin, *Five Stars for Failure* succeeds in becoming a beautifully strange melding of sound and rhythm. The bizarreness and obscurity of the tracks, most of which are accompanied by Martin's liquid voice, would make anyone's ears perk up like an aroused Chihuahua. Dancing is *not* optional.

TASTY LICKS
 In the days of yore, there was no such thing as recorded music. Yup, everything was live. My nostalgic tendencies have compelled me to impart to you the joyous occasions when I am lucky enough to go to a show (sheesh, I sound like a commercial). The point is, I believe that live shows are often better than recorded music. Thus, this section will be devoted to checking out performances by local artists (perhaps some national ones, but not a lot), with bits 'n' pieces of candid interviews with the musicians. I'm happy to announce that lately I've checked out quite a deluge of shows by some local artists. So, expect an auditory feast profiling Kaitlyn Ni Donovan, Maria Webster, Ritsu, Frances Farmer Gals, Eva Festa, October's Gate and 151 in upcoming issues!

*Reviews by Rachel Ehora.
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 about shows that I should know
 about.
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