

Type O Negative, *Life is Killing Me*, 2003 ROADRUNNER RECORDS By Matt Stone

For people like me, a band such as The Cure is far too cheery. For the rest of us who like our Goth-music DARK and LOUD, there is Type O Negative.

Brooklyn-based quartet Type O Negative has released *Life is Killing Me*: a 15-track blast of beautifully orchestrated layers, evenly paired with distorted riffing, all composed by vocalist/bassist/songwriter Peter Steele.

This installment returns to the musical genres of the band's breakthrough '93 album, *Bloody Kisses*, made of fast-paced punk and funeral dirge Goth epics.



Songs like "I Don't Wanna Be Me" and "I Like Gills" stand out with their less-is-more formula, while others such as "Anesthesia" and "How Could She?" are carefully constructed by more than two hands: Steel; guitarist Kenny Hickey; keyboardist Josh Silver; and drummer Johnny Kelly.

Hedwig fans will be delighted to find the band's cover of "Angry Inch" within the disc's digital depths. Punk and metal show their notable influences via this track's aggression and alternating vocals between Steel and Hickey.

Demonstrated here is the necessary struggle between darkness and light to find and validate one another. Look no further than "Nettie," Steel's touching tribute to his mother.

Blonde Redhead, *Misery is a Butterfly*, 2004 4AD/BEGGARS RECORDS By Matt Hudkins

I hate giving out secrets, but here I go: *Misery is a Butterfly* is the best album of 2004 (so far). And, it will be an album that decorates the best lists at the end of this decade. It kills all those horrible comparisons I tried to create in my first draft of this uber-review.

I have to answer the one question: Why should you listen to it? Because, dammit! Don't let another day go by being satisfied with the status quo of music. If you are in a rut, a bad relationship, a monotonous job, throw in this music while you're stuck on the Delta Highway for the umpteenth time, and count yourself lucky. This album is what the best of us dream to be.

Way to leave out any information about the actual music. — ed.

Carlos Guitarlos, *Straight From the Heart*, 2003 NOMAD RECORDS By Tom Wilt

Carlos Guitarlos has given lovers of American roots music a stunning masterpiece. *Straight From the Heart* is a look into the mirror of the former street musician who suffered from years of substance abuse. First and foremost, Guitarlos is a bluesman, in contrast to someone who simply plays the blues.

His writing ranks with blues masters Son House and Robert Johnson. The title song is a reflection of a fallen soul, who admits he has not talked with god for "years and years, as a friend." Even though the subjects are often deep pain and lost love, there are songs that make you want to find a dance floor. "Poppin' and Bumpin'" is one such song.

"You Don't Know What Love Is" takes the listener to the days of biting Texas blues guitar, invoking the likes of Gatemouth Brown. Guitarlos is equally at home with deep soul, and Cajun.

Guitarlos is aided by some old friends on this album: Dave Alvin (Blasters) and John Doe (X). Years from now, students and writers will mention this as one of the best albums from the early 2000s. Pick it up to see what they will be writing about.

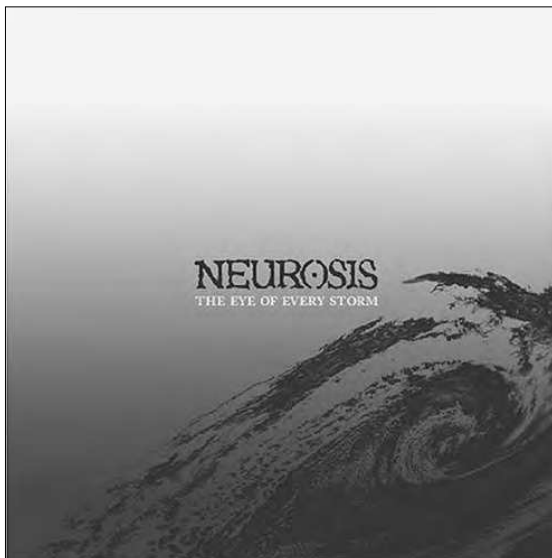
Neurosis, *The Eye of Every Storm*, 2004 NEUROT RECORDINGS By Justin Gast

Every generation has that one group whose music rings of a sound completely outside the norm, untouchable in the creative way in which it represents itself. In the same way that Pink Floyd separated themselves with their unique obscure style of music, so Bay Area rock legend Neurosis has done with its latest release, *The Eye of Every Storm*.

This epic follow up to their 2001 release, *The Sun That Never Sets*, *Storm* goes in a direction that leaves Neurosis unmatched by other artists. No group produces such emotionally driven rock with dark lyrics, while simultaneously combining dynamic, eclectic sounds of tribal, folk and metal. These are used to drive each of the album's eight tracks.

With vitally inspiring songs that clock in at around eight to nine minutes on average, you become lost in the sounds of churning guitar rhythms, droned out folk instruments and screams of pain, anguish and struggle.

The Eye of Every Storm illuminates Neurosis' consistent musical perfection. During almost twenty years of existence they have continued to succeed in separating themselves, musically and spiritually, from all other groups out there today.



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