

Fill Your Ears

Music picks from '06

From Mastodon to Martin Denny in 10 Steps

Name: Vanessa Salvia

Paying the Bills By: Uh, bills are supposed to be paid?

File Under: Alternative '80s, punk/metal, lounge

Extracurricular Activities: '50s pulp fiction, weird movies, sleep

Looking Ahead: April '07: New baby on whom to inflict my bizarre musical tastes

Mastodon, Blood Mountain (Reprise)

The second concept album from the new (not nü) kings of metal. Mastodon has reinvigorated metal, producing complex rock combining elements of prog, old school metal and Southern rock. How could anything called *Blood Mountain* be bad? This is not metal for luncheads.



Jesu, Silver (Hydrahead Records)

Inverted doom. We'll call it mood metal. Shimmering guitar and rumbling bass from one of the geni of industrial metal titans Godflesh.

Johnny Cash at San Quentin CD/DVD (Sony)

The complete San Quentin concert, including interviews with prisoners and guards and the performances of Carl Perkins, the Statler Brothers and the Carter Family, who were also on the bill. A sure winner for just about anybody.



Jucifer, If Thine Enemy Hunger (Relapse)

Continuing to push the edges of female-fronted heavy rock, this duo is both sexy and scary, ominously heavy at times and also eerily quiet.

Melvins, A Senile Animal (Ipecac)

More accessibly rock-y but still offensive to the average listener. Adding a second drummer results in drum solos on nearly every track; surprisingly butt rockin'.



Yo La Tengo, I Am Not Afraid Of You And I Will Beat Your Ass (Matador)

Another winner from these indie favorites. Seems like they can't make a bad album.

Ouija Radio, Oh No ... Yes! Yes! (Crustacean)

A little bit new wave-y, a little bit punk, with a Minneapolis sound. Fitting, 'cause that's where they're from.

Bad Brains, Live At CBGB 1982 DVD (Music Video Distribution)

One of the greatest hardcore bands ever, in the greatest hardcore venue ever, in one of the greatest hardcore years ever. Sure to please any punk fan.



Rockin' Bones: 1950s Punk and Rockabilly (Rhino)

Get all shook up with 101 authentic rockabilly rave-ups, from '54 to '69, in a cool box set.

The Best of Martin Denny's Exotica (Capitol/EMI)

The finest exotica, 18 tracks, plus a bonus interview with the man himself.

A Modicum of Hope

Name: Steven Sawada

Paying the Bills By: I'm sure curmudgeon can be considered an occupation in some country

File Under: I told you when I came I was a stranger ...

Extracurricular Activities: Thinking and reading

Looking Ahead: Building a shrine to the goddess Newsom

Joanna Newsom, Ys (Drag City)

J Dilla, Donuts (Stones Throw)

Wooden Wand, Second Attention (Kill Rock Stars)

Colleen et Les Boites a Musique, s/t (Leaf)

Beirut, The Gulag Orkestar (Ba Da Bing)

Franco Battiato, Fetus (rerelease) (Water)

Giuseppe Ielasi, s/t (Hapna)

Fovea Hex, Neither Speak Nor Remain Silent: Huge (Janet)

Vetiver, To Find Me Gone (Dicristina)

Entrance, Prayer of Death (Tee Pee)

I could gush for days about my newfound love for Joanna Newsom and *Ys*, her latest blessing to us mortals, but I think I've already said enough. I will say, though, that her recent tour with boyfriend Bill Callahan made for possibly the best live show I've ever seen. So to the other contenders: I nabbed a copy of *Prayer of Death* in its inchoate, "unreleased" phase; it has since been picked up by Tee Pee records. I know Blakeslee was shopping around his preternatural, electric-blues gospel for some time, and I'm happy he's found a decent home for it. Fovea Hex is a collaborative project between composer Carter



Burwell, Brian Eno, Colin Potter (of Current 93) and cult legend vocalist Clodagh Simonds. I picked this up on a whim and was completely blown away; *Huge* is only a three song EP (part of the short-run *Neither Speak Nor Remain Silent* series), but its brooding, minimalist approach to ambient and drone based music is eerie to say the least. Battiato is a god in his native Italy. *Fetus* is his first album and concisely encapsulates his early prog-rock days. Mad props to James Toth of Wooden Wand for continuing to plod through a perilous tour schedule, always acknowledging Eugene despite our scant turnouts. *Second Attention* is a nice homage to all the great male troubadours of the '60s and '70s. And finally, Jay-Dee, R.I.P. ... thank you for rejuvenating and reinventing hip hop with your always fresh boom bap.



"Everything You Listen to Sounds the Same"

Name: Molly Templeton

Paying the Bills By: Reading, watching, writing, rearranging words

File Under: Still listening to mid-'90s college rock? Hey, me too!

Extracurricular Activities: Compulsive reader; Zelda junkie; would-be world traveler; learning to love the kitchen

Looking Ahead: Shins in January, Bright Eyes in April

Band of Horses, Everything All the Time (Sub Pop)

The Thermals, The Body, the Blood, the Machine (Sub Pop)

Neko Case, Fox Confessor Brings the Flood (Anti-)

Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Show Your Bones (Interscope)

TV on the Radio, Return to Cookie Mountain (Interscope)

Mates of State, Bring it Back (Barsuk)

Cat Power, The Greatest (Matador)

Bound Stems, Appreciation Night (Flameshovel)

DeVotchKa, Curse Your Little Heart (Ace Fu)

Twilight Singers, Powder Burns (One Little Indian)



Pulling this together was harder than it should've been, and there are a good number of things I just didn't get or didn't get to listen to

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