

**MORE**  
**>ALBUMS<**

even more retrospective ('Slim', 'Back', 'Firefly'), and in so doing show how much they love the work of classic songwriters such as Lee Hazlewood and Scott Walker. A further contradiction of the Alpha sound is that although the songs all appear on the surface to be simple, there is quite obviously a whole lot going on in the background.

*Come From Heaven* is an album which grows with every listen and consequently, could well be one of the slow burning classics of the year.

DOMINIC WAGHORN

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
**What's Up Matador (Matador)**

Home to our own Bailter Space (until they recently decided to trip off into indie wilderness again), not to mention the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Liz Phair, Guided By Voices, Pavement, and innumerable weirdo outfits, Matador is one of the truly enduring American indies. This compilation is the companion piece to an instructional film made by Clay Traver (from Chavez) as an introduction to the label's charms, and as such, does a grand job.

The first disc dishes out the 'hits', including Bailter Space's 'Splat', and disc two dishes the collector scum a 20 track feeding frenzy. It's good as a sampler of delights I was previously oblivious to, and it's recommended for the curious as well as the converted.

Mac Hodge

**HOLLY COLE**  
**Dark Dear Heart (Capitol)**

I can read the headlines now. 'Canadian jazz chanteuse goes pop in fifth album shock!' Well, not quite, but *Dark Dear Heart* is a long way from Cole's jazzy beginnings. She wouldn't be the first artist to indulge in a little genre hopping, but *Dark Dear Heart* is a clear signal of Cole's pop ambitions. Here, the warmth of her smoky, mellifluous voice remains intact, but with Larry Klein (Joni Mitchell) at the production helm, it has been sculpted into a multi-layered, modern, pop setting.

Cole has already made her mark as an interpreter of other people's songs. Her 1995 album *Temptation* consisted entirely of Tom Waits' tracks, rendered with such an endearing touch that even my Mum loved 'em. On *Dark Dear Heart*, the Beatles, Joni Mitchell, Mary Margaret O'Hara, and Sheryl Crow, all receive the Cole treatment, and again, the results are uniformly excellent. A couple of sparkling originals and an evocative reading of the lullaby 'All The Pretty Little Horses', round out a compelling collection.

Sure, the honeyed voice, immaculate musicianship and generally non-threatening demeanour of *Dark Dear Heart* make it perfect background fodder for a dinner party, but if you choose to listen closer, *Dark Dear Heart* offers a whole lot more than just easy listening.

MARTIN BELL

**KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD**  
**BAND**

**Trouble Is... (Revolution)**

Stylistically, while Kenny Wayne Shepherd is more comparable to Stevie Ray Vaughn, he holds great respect for originals like Albert King, Muddy Waters, etc. and you can hear it in his playing. Having listened to blues for most of his life, and performed live since he was 13, Shepherd now releases his second album at the tender age of 20.

With *Trouble Is...*, Shepherd has topped his debut *Ledbetter Heights*, due in part to the production job of ex-Talking Head Jerry Harrison, who did a similar modern sound job for Live's *Throwing Copper*. The combination of 'big rock' with Shepherd's natural abilities on the Stratocaster, make this an enjoyable listen without delving too far into cliché territory. Wisely Shepherd has enlisted a competent singer to help out, and not tried to tackle all the vocals himself. The material is mainly original, excluding Bob Dylan's 'Everything Is Broken', and the obligatory Hendrix cover, 'I Don't Live Today'.

It's quite easy to imagine Shepherd jamming with Joe Satriani and Steve Vai on the new G3 tour, and there's surely a bright future ahead for KWS.

GEOFF DUNN

**THE DEAD C**  
**Tusk (Siltbreeze)**  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
**Tard & Further'd (Siltbreeze)**

I was informed that the new Dead

C album was their most rock orientated album to date, and decided I best investigate for myself. Packaged as usual in stark black and white, my thoughts first turned to the title and whether the rock concept had contributed to a Fleetwood Mac pisstake. Gladly no relation. Aside from the bookending 'Plane' and 'Tusk', it's possible to discern a remote amount of 'rock'. 'Head' does its best to take yours clean off, and 'Tuba' is almost the Dead C at their most structured, but at just a minute and a half that passes quickly. The Dead C, still a thousand millennia from even approaching the word 'conventional', the converted will be happy the rest can continue to pretend they don't exist.

Does such a thing as a Siltbreeze sound exist? Well soak in just a couple of tracks from *Tard & Further'd* and you'd probably nod to the lo-fi recording quality evident on most of the tracks. Certainly there's a DIY ethic in evidence, and this compilation follows the early path of some of today's more reputable or worthy indie acts, including pre-Blues Explosion, Jon Spencer in Gibson Bros., and Sebadoh and Guided By Voices, all of whom, once or twice, include a needle-in-the-red-blast. However the most striking thing about the label apparent on this album, is the abundance of local acts

eking out, if not an earning, an existence. Featured are the Terminals, the Dead C, Alastair Galbraith, and Queen Meanie Puss. My fave here, however, is the early Builders stylings of Mike Rep and the Quotas, proving that the spirit of indie rock is what ties the 'underground' (and Siltbreeze) together.

Mac Hodge

**PULLEY**  
**60 Cycle Hum (Epitaph)**

Pulley is the part-time project of Scott Radinsky, the LA Dodgers baseball pro and former vocalist for Ten Foot Pole and Scared Straight, teamed up here with members of Face To Face and other Simi Valley, Ca. veterans. A part-time affair it may be, but like the last Pulley album, *Esteem Driven Engine*, the fast paced *60 Cycle Hum* powers along, crackling with energy, and displaying as much straight ahead dedication as any full-time West Coasters. There's more aggression displayed here than on the previous outing — but clues are given in 'Outside Opinion' and 'What', as to the sources of Radinsky's anger. No, of course things doesn't change much from song to song, and the album is over as quickly as it begins, but that shouldn't matter to fans of

90s punk — as a pal recently said, "most of the time I only want to hear fast music anyway."

TROY FERGUSON

**SIX FEET UNDER**  
**Warpath (Metal Blade)**

Chris Barnes was one of death metal's more amusing vocalists during his time with the impressive Cannibal Corpse, mainly due to his Z-grade gore/splatter fixations. With *Six Feet Under* his lyrics are not quite as disgusting as in the past, but will remain scrutinised by the likes of the PMRC.

Produced at Scott Burns' legendary Morrisound Studio in Tampa, Florida, by Metal Blade proprietor Brian Slagel, *Warpath* sees Barnes and cohorts in fine crunching form. Guitarist Allen West unleashes some of the fattest riffs you'll hear this side of hell, while the rhythm section excel in their intensity. Barnes is in fine growling voice, and still with that slasher obsession, as heard on 'Revenge of the Zombie' and 'As I Die'.

*Six Feet Under* are evidence that the Florida death scene still has some life in it. Now, I wonder if Barnes has anything to do with all those serial killings down there?

GAVIN BERTRAM

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