

jan 20th

ANDREW BIRD
Noble Beast/Useless Creatures
[Deluxe Edition]
Fat Possum

BON IVER
Blood Bank / Jagjaguwar

CROSBY STILLS & NASH
Allies
Avalon UK

DEADLOCK
Manifesto / Liferforce Records

GIN WIGMORE
Extended Play EP/Motown

LISA HANNIGAN
Sea Sew / ATO/Red

MARIAH CAREY
The Ballads/Sony Legacy

REEL BIG FISH
Fame, Fortune, Fornication
Rock Ridge Music

jan 27th

ANDREW BIRD
Noble Beast / Fat Possum

DALEK
Gutter Tactics / Ipecac

FRANZ FERDINAND
Tonight: Franz Ferdinand
Domino

IT DIES TODAY
Lividity / Trustkill

SEPULTURA
A-Lex / SPV

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Working On A Dream
Columbia

SYLOSIS
Conclusion Of An Age
Nuclear Blast

feb 3rd

CANNIBAL CORPSE
Evisceration Plague
Metal Blade

DIPOLO
Decent Work For Decent Pay
Big Dada Records/Revolver

DOKKEN
Under Lock And Key
Rhino Flashback

THE FRAY
The Fray / Sony

HEARTLESS BASTARDS
The Mountain / Fat Possum

LEONA LEWIS
Spirit: The Deluxe Edition
J-Records

RED JUMPSUIT APPARATUS
Lonely Road / EMI

THE VON BONDIES
Love Hate And Then There's You
Shout Factory

feb 10th

ANNIE LENOX
The Annie Lenox Collection
Sony

BEN LEE
The Rebirth Of Venus
New West Records

BUSTA RHYMES
Back On My B.S.
Universal Motown

INDIA.ARIE
Testimony, Vol. 2: Love & Politics
Republic

KARI JOBE
Kari Jobe / Integrity Media

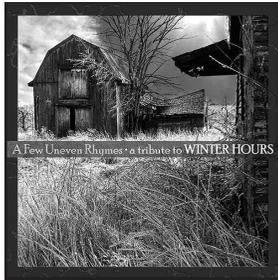
LETHARGY
Purification / Powerage Rock

LILY ALLEN
It's Not Me, It's You / EMI

NAPALM DEATH
Time Waits For No Slave
Century Media

THIN LIZZY
Live And Dangerous
Friday Music

discs (AUDIO)



Various Artists A Few Uneven Rhymes: A Tribute To Winter Hours Main Man Records

Tribute records can be a very hit or miss proposition. Oftentimes they feature a few good tracks, and the rest are, well, not as good. So it must have been gratifying for longtime radio personality and WBJB Music Director Jeff Raspe when his call for artists to contribute to this tribute to his favorite band resulted in such a talented line-up of artists. The result is one of the most consistently satisfying tribute albums in recent memory.

More than anything else, this album provides testimony to the sound that Winter Hours created. It's interesting that these 27 tracks, recorded by different artists in different studios, hang together well enough to have you believe that this music was all recorded by one band. That is a powerful legacy indeed, and a tribute to the power of melody to which Winter Hours aspired.

Because all of the performances are so strong, it's difficult to pick one or two tracks, but *The Aquanians* own John Pfeiffer provides some great guitar work on Christian Beach's version of "I Want," as well as on In Between Dreams' cover of "Say The Word." The Winter Hours classic "Hyacinth Girl" is beautifully interpreted by Jack Bragg with Deena Shoskes.

There will be release parties for the album at 1978 Maplewood Arts Center on Jan. 24, Maxwell's in Hoboken on Jan. 31, and the Strand Theatre in Lakewood on Feb. 7.

This is perfect music for the winter hours ahead.

In A Word: Timeless
Grade: A
—by Ken Shane

Scale The Summit Carving Desert Canyons Prosthetic

Progressive metal is a vague, nebulous genre, but Scale The Summit embody it perfectly. *Carving Desert Canyons* just sounds futuristic, no matter what your definition of the word is. It's fast-moving, epic



melodies and grinding guitars feel alien and unfamiliar, and it's an effect that's used expertly. They bring some real originality to a genre that's notorious for its complacency, which deserves credit.

Scale The Summit have an alarming degree of command over their instruments, and it's readily evident; these tracks are packed with complicated time signatures, intricate solos, and all-around musical acrobatics. However, there's not much to separate one song from the other thematically, especially without lyrics. The compositions are long, and there are a lot of them, and they tend bleed into each other. Maybe this stuff is the cat's meow for someone with a master's degree in composition from Berkeley. But I'm just a screaming deadbeat from New Jersey, and I became very bored, very quickly.

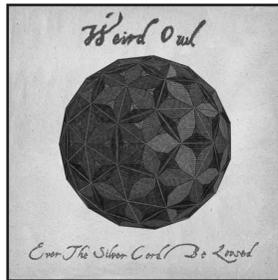
Like a lot of bands with incredibly talented members, Scale The Summit lack something to anchor them in reality. The music is impressive technically, but it lacks emotion, and while it's slick, polished production values are impressive, it feels sterile. Surely, it's possible for these guys to merge technical expertise with accessibility. Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Dream Theatre—nobody can deny the raw emotion behind their music. Unfortunately, Scale The Summit are unable to find a connection with their listeners, and it reduces their album to a self-indulgent bore.

In A Word: Batman
Grade: C+
—by Josh Frank

Weird Owl Ever The Silver Cord Be Loosed Tee Pee Records

As stoner rock goes, the equation reads as something like as the tempo approaches zero, the quality of the song approaches perfection. Of course, if it were that simple, we'd all be catatonic in droning fuzz-heaven, and as it turns out, the math is a little more complicated than that.

Weird Owl aren't the slowest stoner rock band out there, but



Ever The Silver Cord Be Loosed does sound like it was processed through a quaalude filter. Each one of the eight songs here moves along at a pace that seems to warp the time spent with it to an inevitable, "Huh?" which is a good thing, to a point.

But as things go on, a longing for something more creeps in. The inevitable Brooklyn/Tee Pee Records worship of all things Pentagram and their latter day counterparts in Witchcraft and labelmates Graveyard shines through here, even while singer Trevor Tyrrell sounds like a drugged Mick Jagger with Aldous Huxley-meets-Terrence McKenna-esque fascination for biblical interpretation through the third eye.

But the highs just aren't high enough and the lows follow

suit—the experience of *Silver Cord* evens out and ends up being nebulous, without leaving much of an impression. The time spent with it, however, is at least worth the price of admission.

In A Word: Hazy
Grade: B-
—by Patrick Slevin

The New Odds Cheerleader Second Motion

Dormant for almost a decade, The New Odds re-emerged this summer like a phoenix from the ashes of a forest fire in the Canadian Rockies. With a new album and a spot on tour with the Barenaked Ladies, The New Odds may seem like a completely unnecessary throwback to the '90s, and that's exactly what they are. Their new album, *Cheerleader*, sounds like Squeeze and Tom Petty taking a bath, but it's cleaner and more melodic than any power-pop band of recent memory, and, unfortunately, it's also much more boring.

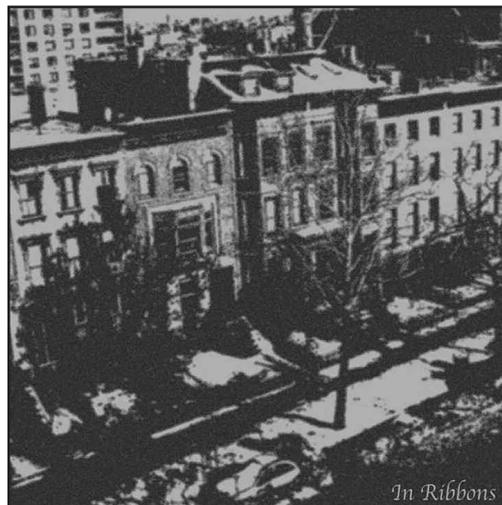
What's surprising about *Cheerleader* is that it doesn't

sound like the work of four veteran musicians. This is more of a bad thing than a good thing; although it has the youthful exuberance of a garage band, it also has the awkward and boring songwriting and the insecurity of musicians who are not comfortable with each other. Simply put, it feels much more like a half-hearted reunion record than it should. The instrumentation sounds sparse, and the songs don't sound properly filled out. The album is the musical equivalent of a rusting scaffold.

The album isn't a complete failure by any means. The members of The New Odds channel early Weezer records on many of these songs, and they've preserved the lighthearted optimism of the Clinton years accurately. But this record definitely could have used a few more years in the oven, because as it is now, it sounds too much like a demo. If anything, it's a lesson in preparation for future reunion records.

In A Word: Hammock
Grade: C
—by Josh Frank

disc of the week



In Ribbons

Mr. A and Mrs. B
Love/Hate

In the vein of Neutral Milk Hotel and the Decemberists, *In Ribbons* pairs rich, chorused acoustic sounds with a shrill and wavering voice that narrates for us sad stories about people who do stupid things because of love. Now that it's become so much of a stereotype, it sounded to me like a formula for

mediocrity, but John Cole, the man behind *In Ribbons*, manages to squeeze little spots of brilliance out of clichés.

The single is a toothpaste-colored vinyl 45 with two songs, both of which are cute and heartrending in their own way. The title track builds slowly to an orchestral finale, which is

appropriately thick and loud and bursts with heartbroken energy. The B-side isn't quite as memorable, but it still has the freshness and narrative longing that so much music lacks. The best part is that it's all recorded admirably well, especially for an unknown indie-rock trubador with just a laptop and a guitar.

Please go ahead and shell out three bucks for the vinyl version of this single. I am the most zealous advocate I know of iTunes and free downloads, but on the inside, my bearded, beret-wearing, purist feels the need to advocate anyone who still puts out music on wax. And when it's so cheap, what could go wrong? The only thing more I can hope for is that we'll be updated on Mr. C and Mrs. D's conditions on future albums.

In A Word: Bummer
Grade: B+
—by Josh Frank