

8/25/03

WHAT I'M LISTENING TO

Dido



After selling more than 4 million copies of her 1999 debut, *No Angel*, Dido is back Sept. 30 with her second disc, *Life for Rent*. Whose music is the British singer living for these days?

DAMIEN RICE "He's an Irish singer-songwriter with a beautiful voice and gorgeous, melancholy music. I saw him live, and he just moved me."

50 CENT GET RICH OR DIE TRYIN' "I just love the way he raps. He's so distinctive. For a club record, it's brilliant. I'm still not bored of it."

CERYL MATTHEWS COCKAHOOP "She used to sing in a Welsh band called Catatonia, but she's done a beautiful, daring country album."

SEAN PAUL DUTTY ROCK/BLU CANTRELL BITTERSWEET "I'm loving the single 'Get Busy' and that song [Paul] did with Blu Cantrell, 'Breathe.'"

P*NUT SWEET AS "He's a brilliant rapper who did the beats for me on [new single] 'White Flag.' I love it because it's all about old-school hip-hop."

5/26/2003

The Golden Age of Grotesque

Marilyn Manson (*Interscope*)

Reviewed by Sona Charaipotra

"I'm not ashamed, you're entertained/ But I'm not a puppet, I am a grenade," sings shock rocker Marilyn Manson on the angry, burlesque "Vodevil," one of 15 tracks on his highly profane new disc. Underneath all the eerie makeup, though, Manson reveals surprising musical prowess. His ambient goth-rock operas meld detailed orchestrations with industrial abrasiveness. Manson punctuates the vivid, swirling title cut with strings, horns and gunshots. But the standout is the closer, "Obsequy (The Death of Art)," a striking instrumental that blends subdued piano, violin and TV noise. **BOTTOM LINE:** Wicked

6/23/03

Hail to the Thief

Radiohead (*Capitol*)

Reviewed by Sona Charaipotra

On Radiohead's praiseworthy sixth album, the Brit alt quintet returns to the more traditional rock sound that defined its 1997 breakthrough *OK Computer*, surrounding crunching electric guitars with horns and piano. Still, the group hasn't forgotten the experimental, spacey soundscapes that marked 2000's *Kid A*. On "Stand Up. Sit Down" frontman Thom Yorke sings about raindrops, backed by a cascade of computer-generated blips. "A Punchup at a Wedding" layers Yorke's signature wail with electronica beats, but the standout is the aching, folky "A Wolf at the Door." **BOTTOM LINE:** All Hail Radiohead

Critic's Choice

A Mark, A Mission, A Brand, A Scar

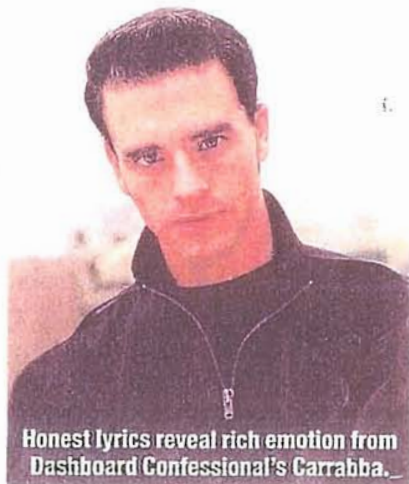


Dashboard Confessional

(*Vagrant*)

Reviewed by Sona Charaipotra

With his bittersweet breakthrough, 2001's *The Places You Have Come to Fear the Most*, Dashboard's one-man band Chris Carrabba became the poster boy for emo, a cathartic, lyric-driven brand of pop-punk. On this accomplished effort, Carrabba adds a crackerjack three-piece back-up band for a fuller rock sound that propels his acoustic earnestness to even greater heights. With his open, expressive tenor, Carrabba imbues the first-love anthem "Hands Down" with a joyful nostalgia. Elsewhere, the melancholy "Carve Your Heart Out Yourself" questions the resilience of a hopeless optimist: "Dig your ditch deep enough/ To keep you clear of the sun." But the standout is the hushed, lovely "Bend and Not Break," which showcases the direct, confessional lyrics that drive this album: "Try to understand/ There is an old mistake/ That fools will make/ And I'm the king of them." **BOTTOM LINE:** Hits the Mark



Honest lyrics reveal rich emotion from Dashboard Confessional's Carrabba.