



Blind Melon *Live at the Palace*

Forget the "Bee Girl". Blind Melon needs to be recognized for who they really are – a truly unique band with a gritty, soulful style. Recorded just 10 days before singer Shannon Hoon met his tragic demise, *Live at the Palace* gives us the Blind Melon we have yearned for since 1995. Snippets of conversation from a coherent Hoon, as well as 12 full songs including *Tones of Home*, *Vernie*, and *Change* have been captured for the enjoyment of audiences greedily looking to hear more from Blind Melon. The raw clarity of the music on *Live at the Palace* beats any "rare" internet download and never-before-seen tour photos and liner notes enhance this CD to make it a steal at any amount.

Hellogoodbye *Zombies! Aliens! Vampires! Dinosaurs!*



With a title like that, I wasn't sure what to expect when I picked up the first full-length album from this southern California band. I figured it would be some campy "Richard Cheese"-y Vegas lounge act, but after giving it the once-over, I found out was this band far exceeded my expectations – they were great. Harder than pop and too happy to be alternative, this infectious band refuses to be put in a category. By melding the styles and influences of the Beach Boys, Frank Sinatra, New Order and others, the disc explodes. The final product is so much that it could almost be the soundtrack to your life while you're walking across the quad. "Baby, It's Fact" is a bubbly tune you'll find yourself humming when you least expect it, and "Homewrecker" is a funny song about one of the guys ex-girlfriends. In fact, all of the songs on this disc have something to do with girlfriends, either past or present. What more material do you need for inspiration when everything is under your nose. Hellogoodbye is currently on tour through November and catching one of their shows would be a great idea. But first, buy the album and love them for who they are.

Slightly Stoopid *Closer to the Sun* Reviewed by Gabriel Jacobs



If you like Sublime, you'll love Slightly Stoopid! San Diego's Slightly Stoopid caught the ear of Sublime's late front man, Bradley Nowell, in 1995 when they were just in high-school, and he signed them on to his own label, Skunk Records. This reggae influenced band released their first "Self-Titled" album in 1996. They have since developed a worldwide following with their unique fusion of progressive rock/reggae, acoustic rock, dub, blues, hip-hop and punk.

Since 2003, they released 3 other albums that represent their growth. "Everything You Need" (2003) boasts

the great vibes of that So-Cal laid-back lifestyle, featuring upbeat music that is a perfect for any party. Remixes of John Denver's "Leaving on a Jet Plane," and Wyclef's "Perfect Gentleman" are awesome! Hip-hop influenced tracks such as "Everything You Need," (feat. G. Love), "Runnin With a Gun", "Killin' Me Deep Inside", and "World Goes Round" demonstrate their versatility in playing any type of music; and sounding good at it! You may recognize "Sweet Honey" as the theme song from the popular T.V. show, "The O.C."

Their latest and 5th coming album, "Closer to the Sun," (2005) is reminiscent of their early reggae roots, yet displays how they continue to bring their creativity to the next level. From the mellow mood of "Babylon is Falling," to ragga/hip-hop influenced tracks such as "This Joint" and "See It No Other Way" (feat. Reggae greats Barrington Levy and Mr. Mutton), the diversity continues. Tracks like "Fat Spliffs," "Older" and "Closer to the Sun" are just a few defining, upbeat, catchy tunes on this album that represent who Slightly Stoopid is as a music entity and the unique style that only they can capture. Slightly Stoopid's live performances are incredible; very tight as a band and vocals are always in pitch!

www.SlightlyStoopid.com
www.myspace.com/stoopid

Gojira/Godzilla Review by: Kaustav Acharya



Certain legends just seem to have a name that sticks. When you think of King Kong, you think of a giant ape; Superman is an unstoppable man of strength, and if you think of Godzilla, you think of a giant prehistoric monster terrorizing Japan. While many movies have been made on the first few legends, the original Japanese version never made it into local video stores. It seems that almost 50 years later, *Gojira*, the picture that inspired the 1956 film *Godzilla*, would make its debut to local shelves.

The story of *Gojira* is the basically same one that can be found on the US version: nuclear tests on the island have awakened a prehistoric monster lying dormant in the Japanese waters. Young lovers Emiko and Ogata have a mutual friend who seems to have the only way to stop this monster from turning the islands of Japan into nothing but a smoldering ruin.

While some of the events seemed too dramatic and drawn out, we have to keep in mind that circumstances were different back in the 50s. It is without a doubt that the movie touched on some rather sensitive matters for the time (it is so even today). The movie focused on two lovers sticking with each other dur-



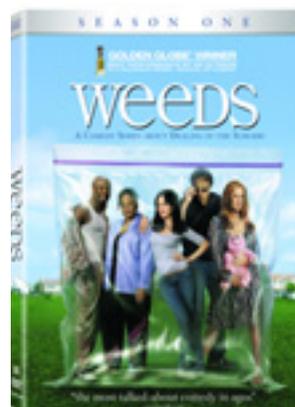
ing a crisis. Being a Japanese film, it's to no surprise that a major character has to die in order for the rest of the people to survive and carry on. It seems that the sacrifice for the "common good" is relevant in their culture because this is not the only time I have seen it drawn out like this.

I think what was most impressive about it though, was the camera work. For a movie that's over half a century old, it is quite amazing. The effects were nothing spectacular, but all in all it showed real talent for its day.



Back in 2004, *Entertainment Weekly* called the American version "the most awesome of tacky movie monsters." I happen to agree with that. While it's cheesy now, imagine the impact it had then. Not only that, if you think about it, how has the name *Gojira/Godzilla* turned itself into an icon? I think even without trying, the directors made an instant classic. If you've never seen/read about the story, it is definitely worth seeing what the whole fuss is about. We give this movie a solid 4/5 U's.

Weeds *Complete Season One* Lionsgate Films



What happens when you are an affluent member of an elite community living the American Dream and your young husband suddenly drops dead? How do you keep up the payments on a Land

Rover, an expensive house in golf course community of Agrestic, two boys and a housekeeper? You capitalize on the need....for weed. With her husband having been the major bread-winner in the family, main character Nancy, (Mary-Louise Parker) has to find a way to keep up the lifestyle of living amongst the upper crust. Her confidant and accountant Doug, (expertly played by funny guy Kevin Nealon) is already a major pot head, and between him and all his poker buddies Nancy's customer base begins.

Situations encountered include, a rival pot dealer and how he reacts to a new dealer on his turf, expanding into the college market, her husband's irresponsible stoner brother coming to live with them, and Nancy having to start a "Fakery", a fake bakery in which she fronts her marijuana business. Running a bakery leads to all sorts of yummy treats she uses to grow her business and keep her out of the red and into the "green". Being only a half hour sitcom, the zany antics of "The Queen of Green" make me "jones" for more. Not that we encourage any type of illegal activities here at U. Magazine. (cough cough)