

## Fervor in place on latest album by the Stones

By Matt Burton  
Staff Reporter

Rolling Stones  
"Steel Wheels"  
Columbia Records

It's 1989, and the Stones are rolling on "Steel Wheels."

"Steel Wheels," the first album by the Rolling Stones since 1986, is a welcome answer to the question of age affecting rock 'n' roll. It is classic, up-to-date music played with such fervor that nothing recent has come close to equalling its energy and drive.

The Rolling Stones have the unique ability of adapting to time. Such albums, as 1978's "Some Girls" with its discoey undertones, exemplify the Stones' power to change, not surrendering the raw energy that made it the "world's greatest rock and roll band." "Steel Wheels" is no exception; it is truly the Rolling Stones in 1989.

### album

"Sad, Sad, Sad" kicks open the door on "Steel Wheels" with one of Keith Richards' standard introductions. It eases into a no-nonsense rocker with Mick Jagger rolling off the lyrics like he means it. The Stones' trademark of dueling guitars between Richards and Ron Wood just doesn't stop.

The second song on the album is the first single "Mixed Emotions." Here is where the Stones, especially Richards and Jagger, try to lay to rest their feud of recent years, and finally get down to business.

Such lines as "Bury the hatchet/Wipe out the past" show the apparent readiness of the band to get down to business.

Jagger continues: "So get off the fence/ It's creasing your butt/ Life is a party/ Let's get out and strut."

"Mixed Emotions" features new and innovative uses of a synthesizer making the sound modern. The synthesizer, however, is in the background just giving the listener a taste,

while having the band at the forefront of the song. If there is one thing "Mixed Emotions" suffers from, it is too much radio airplay, which can discourage the most avid listener.

"Hold on to Your Hat" is a hard-rocking tune in the tradition of "Hip Shake Thing" that must be played loud. Mick spits out the lyrics like he always has, and Wood and Richards reel out hot guitar licks.



Courtesy of Columbia Records

This song makes the listener say "yeah" with lyrics like: "Hold on to your head/ Don't give me no rap/ I've had it up to here/ With your yackety-yak."

It doesn't stop with "Rock in a Hard Place," highlighting Bill Wyman's funky bass. The middle of the song features a strong jam with incredible drum playing by Charlie Watts supported by Wyman and the rest of the band. At points, however, this song tends to sound overproduced and could have had a more raw edge.

Perhaps the most amazing and innovative song of the decade is "Continental Drift." This song features the Master Musicians of Joujouka, a group of instrumentalists from Morocco who worked with former Stones guitarist Brian Jones before his death. The combination of the Rolling Stones with the Master Musicians of Joujouka creates a sound capable of charming snakes with its definite rhythmic, Middle Eastern flavor. "Continental Drift" begins with a slightly mellow, but still ominous, sound and it builds into an incredible tribal intensity that continues to build faster, finally easing the listener down to where it started.

Overall, "Steel Wheels" is one of the Rolling Stones' strongest efforts ever. It has innovative elements but still has the unmistakable energy that gave the Stones their superstar status.

## Band refines raw energy on album; 'Doolittle' earns a plus for Pixies

By Mark Lage  
Senior Reporter

Pixies  
"Doolittle"  
4-A-D/Elektra-Asylum Records

The list of negative criticisms regarding The Pixies' third album, "Doolittle," and the band's three-album career in general, is substantial.

Kim Deal's bass lines are simple, plodding, and often sound as if they may stumble and fall over their own notes. And her backing vocals often are bland and childish-sounding.

Lead guitarist Joey Santiago's raw talent is roughly equivalent to that of the average household pet, and especially intelligent cats would likely put his riffs to shame.

Singer Black Francis' lyrics may be mildly intriguing upon initial listenings, but further investigation reveals nothing, leaving the listener faced with an obscure, opaque lyrical world, littered with seemingly pointless violent images.

The band's live show often has been criticized for its lack of spontaneity, variety and emotion. Members also are criticized for lack of rapport with the crowd.

All of this goes to prove one thing: there is no equation for determining the merits for a rock 'n' roll record, for if there were, "Doolittle" has way too many flaws. Of course, it does have many good points as well.

One of the strongest aspects of "Doolittle" is the recording itself. The band members, along with

producer/engineer Gil Norton, achieve an absence-of-production sound that is reminiscent of The Beatles' White Album.

"Doolittle" features neither the overproduction of recent emerging alternative stars as The Replacements or Bob Mould, nor the flawed, low-budget sloppiness of earlier Pixies' albums.

The clarity of this album's sound is remarkable. The listener never has to strain to hear any part of the music, even on songs like "Here Comes Your Man," or "Number 13 Baby," where at times as many as three or four guitars are going at once.

"Doolittle" manages to be much more refined than last year's "Surfer Rosa," while maintaining much of the raw energy of that previous album. Granted, there is nothing on "Doolittle" to match the 110 percent abandon of "Rosa" songs like "Broken Face," "Something About You," and "Oh My Golly," but "Doolittle" has plenty of rawness, with the added impact that results from being incorporated into much more tightly and thoughtfully arranged songs.

Another of "Doolittle's" strengths is the band's increased ability to shift gears. The songs range from the bubblegummish stylings of "Here Comes Your Man," and "La La Love You," to the acidic, structured grunge of "Dead," to the frenetically-paced energy of "Crackity Jones," all the way to the relatively straight-ahead rock of "Gouge Away," and "Wave of Mutilation."

Black Francis has added new dimensions to his already unique and versatile voice. The wistfulness and soft expansiveness he displays on "Your Man," and "Mutilation" are not seen on the earlier Pixies' albums. The only thing really missing is something in the lyrics that might indicate why Francis would be wistful or softly expansive. This aside, the vocal effects are undeniable.

A recurring characteristic of the Pixies' music is the alteration between thunderous noise and either relative or absolute quiet. Periods of open silence, featuring only bass and sparse percussion, give way immediately to huge walls of distorted guitars. The distortion often gives way to periods of soft acoustic guitar.

Joey Santiago works for the Pixies, much like George Harrison did for The Beatles. He picks and chooses his places carefully, and fills them with strange, simple noises. His scratches, squeaks, and odd harmonics fill the album, adding to its freshness.

The Pixies, to fall back on the common rock 'n' roll critics' cliché, not only add up to a sum that is greater than their parts, but add up to a sum which also somehow wipes out all of their negatives.

If this explanation seems inadequate to Pixies' fans, the reason is this: "Doolittle," more than any other album I ever have heard, exposes the ultimate inability of the rock record review to provide any real explanation of why records are good or bad.

But I tried.

## Who Dr. Who combines jazz and funk

By Stacey McKenzie  
Staff Reporter

Who Dr. Who  
"Sudden Dose"  
Smooth Wool Records

Who Dr. Who, a new Lincoln band, recently released its first cas-

sette, "Sudden Dose," produced on its own Smooth Wool Records label.

This band combines jazz and funk to create some very danceable tunes.

The style of Who Dr. Who is dominated by a new-tech, electronic sound. It used "sequencers," which are multi-track recordings on a keyboard, to completely pre-produce the

new release.

"Our music is very hard to describe. It is very original and danceable," said Scott Rehling, keyboardist and co-leader of the band.

"We're kind of pioneers in Lincoln in the style of music we do," Rehling said. "This is the first attempt."

The title song, "Sudden Dose," is a mix of overlapping keyboard styles. This computerized, electronic sound has a beat produced by synthesizers, some very blended vocals and a background jazz guitar.

Arrangements that follow have the same urban quality with different arrangements of synthesized sound.

According to Rehling, Who Dr. Who is set up to go live and is hoping to perform openings for semi-national groups.

"The idea is to get the album out first," Rehling said. "The business is very expensive. This is what we want to do for something bigger and better than what we're doing now."

Other band members include Rod Molden, keyboardist and co-band leader, and Henry Wells, lead vocal. Molden has a music degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and currently does studio work.

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The normal evaporation loss is estimated to be equivalent to 21 million bottles of cognac annually, or as much as is shipped in one year to the United States. This year the loss may reach almost 23 million bottles.

The unusually high temperatures, however, have not adversely affected the vineyards in the Cognac region, according to the cognac trade here. The heat may result in a slightly earlier grape harvest this autumn, experts added.

Economic complaints about the exceptional evaporation of cognac this season have been muted due to a greater influx of tourists filling the region's several new hotels.

The economy is further bolstered by a burgeoning interest throughout France in "long drinks" -- combinations of cognac with water, orange juice or ginger ale.

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