

CD Review



Suicide Machines
"Destruction by Definition"
 Hollywood Records
 Grade: A

Here's a good recipe: Take four cups of Mighty Mighty Bosstones and add two cups of Rancid. The result is Suicide Machines.

The Detroit band used to be called Jack Kevorkian and the Suicide Machines. At one show, when people came to see the real Dr. Jack Kevorkian, the band quickly changed their name.

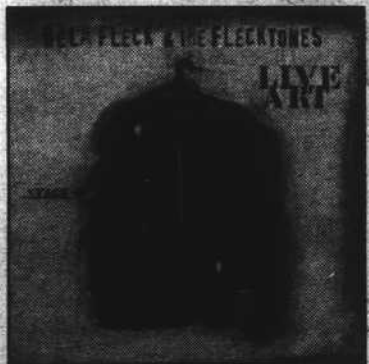
Several other bands have tried to run this punk-ska thing into the ground, but the Suicide Machines pull it off, and pull it off well. "Destruction by Definition," beginning with the song "New Girl," starts off the album on the right track. The thrashing song has become the band's first single, and sums up their style of melody with a hard edge.

The two-to-three-minute ditties that make up the rest of the album keep the record flowing at high speeds. "The Real You" and "Our Time" have great chorus lines, and "Hey" is a great representation of the band's ska style, with Vinnie Nobile playing the trombone and Larry Klimas joining in on tenor sax.

The song "Vans" shows the band's more humorous side, as members discuss their favorite footwear. The tracks "Face Values" and "Break the Glass" are also album standouts, as the band retreats back and forth from rock to ska.

The Suicide Machines will be performing Nov. 24 at the Ranch Bowl in Omaha, where they will join the Descendants. If you like what you hear, you may be interested in finding "Skank For Brains," a split album the band did with San Francisco's Rudiments. The record should be tough to find, but with renditions of "New Girl," "Hey," and "The Real You," and songs not appearing on "Destruction" such as "Green World" and "Bonkers," the investment would be well worth the trouble.

— Patrick Miner



Bela Fleck & The Flecktones
"Live Art"
 Warner Bros. Records
 Grade: A

Although there is a glaring contradiction in the recording of an album and then labeling it "live," the blues and funk band Bela Fleck & The Flecktones captures the fluidity and spontaneity of their famous acoustic live shows on a new double disc, "Live Art."

Bela Fleck & The Flecktones is a delightfully complicated group. The group's music revels in reggae, bops with jazz and continues to spin in a

musical montage. This can frustrate those trying to label their primarily acoustic and solidly surreal sound.

Along with the three original band members — Bela Fleck, whose main instrument is the banjo (which he warps into such grandeur that he leaves the boys from Hee Haw shaking their heads); Victor Wooten, bassist; and Future Man who dons a synth-ax drumitar — "Live Art" also features jazz paragon saxophonist Branford Marsalis and pianist Bruce Hornsby.

The giddiness and cosmic feel of the band permeates all aspects of its identity. A few of the many gems on this album are "Flight of the Cosmic Hippo," a Bela classic; an emotionally moving "New South Africa" and the bluegrass ditty "Cheeseballs in Cowtown."

A catchy, seemingly three-dimensional cover of the Beatles' "Oh, Darling" is lengthened and a startling version of "Amazing Grace" both stand out.

The energy of Bela Fleck & The Flecktones is inspiring and boundless. If you've ever felt the blues or grooved to the soul of jazz, the fresh new "Live Art" CD is a must-have.

— Bret Schulte

The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion
"Now I Got Worry"
 Matador Records
 Grade: B

Jon Spencer is no Eric Clapton.

That is to say, Jon Spencer is not God — as Clapton has been coined. They both sing, play guitar and are unabashed white boys willingly trapped in the blues genre.

But where Clapton idolized and imitated the great blues guitarists, Spencer idolizes and decimates equally great blues artists.

So this short-haired former punk rock kid named Jon Spencer is not God. But he might be the devil.

As frontman of The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, a group that he fervently claims is NOT a blues band, Spencer emits a widespread variety of moans, wails and guttural squelches that turn even the purest rhythm line into a twisted amalgamation of punk sneer and blues heartache.

It's post-punk blues. And every time a flash of sincere style begins to creep in, Spencer and his cohorts — drummer Russell Simins and guitarist/vocalist Judah Bauer — quash it with a belch or a heavily distorted chorus of screams.

On its fourth and latest release, "Now I Got Worry," the Blues Explosion explores an even more chaotic take on the blues than usual. Whereas their self-titled debut was nearly absent of the blues — and their follow-up albums were more focused and tradition-driven — "Now I Got Worry" is a simultaneously beautiful and ugly effort that sounds like a car accident between John Lee Hooker and Johnny Rotten.

The opener, "Skunk," starts with a heavy drum beat and Spencer's usual wail, stuttered by microphone cut-outs and bleeps of static. When the real song starts, it is typical Explosion fare: old-fashioned blues scales, offbeat drums and alternately shouted and slurred vocals.

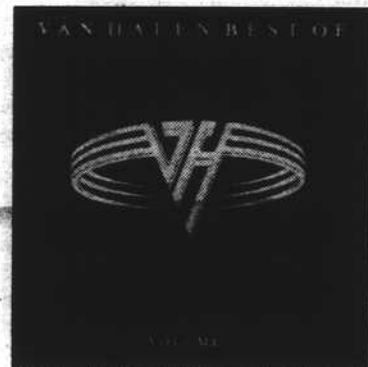
Similar packages are presented in "2Kindsa Love" and "Rocketship," among others. But the Explosion

reaches its peak in "Wail," a solid and tightly maintained blues number that rings of the blues revival genre that Clapton led in the 1960s.

But Spencer can never be constrained to tradition for a full 16 songs, and the Explosion cuts loose on several occasions on this album, letting the blues as it is usually known degenerate into profanity-sputtering and controlled noise. These tracks are not as easily accessible as the Explosion's other songs, but they can grow lovable after repeated listenings.

As a whole, "Now I Got Worry" is an ironic piece of work — as Spencer, Bauer and Simins have become more adept at their instruments and the genre they have chosen, they haven't become less chaotic. Their work only has come to display a more controlled chaos than ever before.

— Jeff Randall



Van Halen
"The Best of Van Halen — Volume I"
 Warner Bros. Records
 Grade: B

Usually, when a band puts out a "Greatest Hits" album, it means they've broken up. In Van Halen's case, it means the end of one era and the beginning of another.

This is a chronological history of the band, beginning in 1978 with the tracks "Runnin' With The Devil" and "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love" from their self-titled album. (Conspicuously absent from the disc are "Ice Cream Man" and "Jamie's Cryin'.")

The rest of the David Lee Roth years are covered, with such classics as "Dance The Night Away," "Jump" and "Panama," the latter two from the signature '80s album, '1984.'

The entire album showcases the signature Van Halen sound, right from the opening track "Eruption." But in the first half of the album, the Roth years, it's easy to understand why Van Halen was one of the highest-grossing arena rock acts of the 1980s. Roth wasn't the best singer around, but he lent the band a trademark attitude it hasn't had since.

The sound on the second half of the album, the Hagar era, is more polished. It's not something you really notice until you've got the songs back-to-back, but the difference is clear — the bad boys went corporate and made money with Sammy Hagar.

The ballads "Dreams," "Why Can't This Be Love" and "When It's Love" are all there in the middle of the album. The pace picks up with classic tracks "Poundcake," "Right Now" and "Humans Being," and it's those songs that make me miss Sammy.

Not that I'm not excited for new singer Gary Charone: I think he'll bring the zest and vitality (and considerably less ego) that the band has sorely needed. But it's the last two tracks that make me very glad Dave got the boot — "Me Wise Magic" and "Can't Get This Stuff No More" are not Dave at his finest, to be diplomatic.

All in all, this is a good piece to add to the VH library — all the hits, little of the filler and a good representation of the band's 12-album, 18-year history.

— Ann Stack

Iowa artists to perform at UNL

Five artists from the University of Northern Iowa School of Music in Cedar Falls will perform at Kimball Recital Hall tonight.

The Northwind Quintet will play a free recital at 8 p.m. The quintet consists of Roberta Huff, flute; Tom Barry, oboe; Jack Graham, clarinet; Thomas Tritle, horn; and David Rachor, bassoon.

Four pieces will be featured in tonight's performance. The first two will include standard wind quintet

repertoire by Anton Reicha and Jean Absil.

In the second half, the artists will play more popular pieces and arrangements by Justinian Tamasuza and Troy E. Thompson.

In addition to their concert tonight, the Northwind Quintet will present a master class for the UNL School of Music this afternoon.

— Emily Wray

Box Office Top 10



Below are the top 10 money-making movies of last weekend. The dollar amounts are represented in millions of dollars.

Movie	Earnings
1. Batman	\$35
2. William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet	\$8.8
3. Set It Off	\$8.5
4. Sleepers	\$3.7
5. High School High	\$3.1
6. The First Wives Club	\$2.15
7. Larger Than Life	\$2.1
8. The Ghost and the Darkness	\$1.66
9. Dear God	\$1.46
10. The Associate	\$1.4

SOURCE: AP



Stay Safe
 this Winter.

Drive Carefully.

Popa Chubby Live!!!

Live in-store performance

Monday, Nov. 11, 4 PM

at **HOMER'S**

14th & 'O' St.

Popa Chubby on Sale!!!

11⁸⁸ CD / 8⁸⁸ CS

"Hit the High Hard One"

Once not enough?

See Popa live at the Zoo Bar

Monday night, Nov. 11

Looking for something to do this week?

UPC has plans for you ...

Sexology 101

Everyone knows about it, thinks about it, talks about it.

Yes, we will be talking about SEX

Thursday, Nov. 14, 9 p.m., The Crib, Nebraska Union

International Film

Cold FEVER

The surprise hit from Iceland!

Sunday, Nov. 17,

3, 5, 7 & 9 p.m.

Mary Rieppma Ross Film Theater

\$3.50 Students/Faculty • \$5.50 General Admission