

New releases keep record buyers busy

Much-anticipated albums provide for strong music sales

BY JIM ZAVODNY
Staff writer

Decisions, decisions.

Record buyers faced many tough ones this year while rummaging through the racks of local record stores and trying to figure which albums to buy. New material from bright stars such as Madonna, Will Smith and the Beastie Boys has helped spark a renewed interest in music — making 1998 a strong year for record sales.

Mel Eberspacher, manager of the downtown Homer's, 1339 O St., said her store and the other Lincoln Homer's locations experienced better-than-average business during the last year.

"There were a few things that were highly anticipated, like the new Beastie Boys and Liz Phair. Those were two that people have been waiting for for a long time," Eberspacher said.

Zero Street Records, 1417 O St., less than a block away from the downtown Homer's, is the only music store in Lincoln that stocks mostly independent and punk rock music on its shelves. Since a majority of the albums owner Kevin Chasek offers are things you won't find at the mall record store or Best Buy, Zero Street hasn't profited much from the success of many recent major label releases.

"The punk scene hasn't been blowing up, but the summer is usually pretty dead for new (punk) releases," Chasek said. "Especially the next month or two, there's not a lot coming out."

However, Chasek said he thinks the fall and winter months include a number of new releases that will boost sales at Zero Street.

"The reason that there's going to be a lot of good things happening this year — especially for indie rock — is there's a lot of good bands out there right now," he said. "I think there's going to be a lot of things that are going to be huge this year, things that are going to make a lot of people happy."

Upcoming albums from Sunny Day Real Estate, Mineral and Atari Teenage Riot should capture the attention of patrons, Chasek said. His best sellers in 1998 have been Fugazi's "End Hits," Avail's "Over the James" and "AnalphabetaPolothology" from the now-defunct indie rockers Cap'n Jazz.

Meanwhile, the "Titanic" soundtrack, the Dave Matthews Band's "Before These Crowded Streets" and the Beastie Boys' "Hello Nasty" are just a few of the albums that sold well at Homer's the past year. Surprisingly, Pearl Jam's "Yield" and the Smashing Pumpkins' "Adore," both expected to explode once they hit the shelves, have achieved only lackluster sales at Homer's.

Eberspacher said she thought new records from Alanis Morissette, Marilyn Manson and the Chemical Brothers would do well at Homer's.

One thing Eberspacher has noticed while

On the record

Along with a few works in progress, the following is a release schedule for albums that should impact the music scene in the fall semester. Remember — all dates are tentative, and the further in the future things are, the greater the possibility of a change in the scheduled release date.

Aug. 25:

Alabama: "For The Record" (RCA)
Better Than Ezra: "How Does Your Garden Grow" (Elektra)
Cracker: "Gentleman's Blues" (Virgin)
Juliana Hatfield: "Bed" (Zoe/Rounder)
Lauryn Hill: "The Miseducation of" (Ruffhouse/Columbia)
Lynyrd Skynyrd: "Essential" (MCA)
Mineral: "End Serenading" (Crank)
Bob Mould: "The Last Dog and Pony Show" (Rykodisc)
Dolly Parton: "Hungry Again" (Blue Eye/Decca)
Royal Crown Revue: "The Contender" (Warner Bros.)
Screaching Weasel: "Television City Dream" (Fat Wreck Chords)
Sex Pistols: "Better Live Than Dead" and "Live at Chelmsford Prison" (Creativeman Disc)
Rob Zombie: "Hellbilly Deluxe" (Geffen)

Sept. 1:

Junior Brown: "Long Walk Back" (Curb)
Willie Nelson: "Teatro" (Island)

Sept. 4:

Pansy Division: "Absurd Pop Song Romance" (Lookout)

Sept. 8:

Black Crowes: "By Your Side" (American/Columbia)
Frank Black: "Frank Black & the Catholics" (spinART) — U.S. release date
The Chemical Brothers: "Brothers Gonna Work It Out" (Freestyle Dust/Astralwerks)
Dancehall Crashers: "Blue Plate Special EP" (MCA)
Digital Underground: "Who's Got the Gravy" (Interscope)
Vince Gill: "Breath of Heaven" (MCA)
Hole: "Celebrity Skin" (DGC)
Saint Etienne: "Good Humor" (Sub Pop)

Sept. 15:

Sheryl Crow: "Riverwide" (A&M)
Hootie & the Blowfish: "Musical Chairs" (Atlantic)
Kiss: "Psycho Circus" (Mercury)
Marilyn Manson: "Mechanical Animals" (Interscope)
Morrissey: "My Early Burglary Years" (Reprise)

Sept. 22:

dc Talk: "Supernatural" (Virgin)
Goo Goo Dolls: "Dizzying Up the Girl" (Warner Bros.)
Chris Isaak: "Speak of the Devil" (Reprise)
Alan Jackson: "High Mileage" (Arista)
Mudhoney: "Tomorrow Hit Today" (Reprise)
Henry Rollins: spoken word album and video—title TBA (DreamWorks)
Sunny Day Real Estate: "How It Feels To Be Something On" (Sub Pop)
Keith Sweat: "Still In The Game" (Elektra)
Hank Williams: "The Complete" (Mercury)

Sept. 29:

Tony Bennet: "Play Ground" (Columbia)
Buffalo Tom: "Smitten" (Polydor)
Bob Dylan: "The Bootleg Series Vol. 4: Bob Dylan Live 1966" (Columbia)
PJ Harvey: "Is This Desire?" (Island)
Joni Mitchell: "Taming the Tiger" (Reprise)

The Samples: "The Tan Mule" (W.A.R.?)
Soul Coughing: "El Oso" (Slash/Warner Bros.)

Oct. 6:

Cake: "Prolonging The Magic" (Capricorn)
Cypress Hill: "IV" (Ruffhouse/Columbia)
Depeche Mode: best of — title TBA (Reprise)
John Mellencamp: self-titled (Columbia)
Mighty Mighty Bosstones: "Live From The Middle East" (Big Rig/Mercury)

Oct. 13:

Baby Face: "Christmas Album" (Epic)
Cyndi Lauper: "Merry Christmas ... Have A Nice Life" (Epic)

Oct. 20:

Jon Spencer Blues Explosion: "Acme" (Matador)
Jad Fair and Yo La Tengo: title TBA (Matador)
Ghost Face Killah: title TBA (Epic)
John Lee Hooker: "The Best of Friends" (Virgin)
Stereolab: "Aluminum Tunes" (Drag City)

Oct. 27:

Afghan Whigs: "1965" (Columbia)
Nada Surf: "The Proximity Effect" (Elektra)

Oct. 31:

Wide: "Hidden Agenda" (-ismist Recordings)

Nov. 3:

Hempilation 2: "More Hits" (Capricorn)
Alanis Morissette: Title TBA (Maverick)
311: Live — Title TBA (Capricorn)

Nov. 10:

Bouncing Souls: "Tie One On" — Live EP (Epitaph)

Nov. 17:

Portishead: "Live" (London)

Preview of Works in Progress — Titles and Release Dates TBA

Atari Teenage Riot: (Digital Hardcore Recordings) — Early '99
Bloodhound Gang: (Geffen) — Late '98
Bluetip: (Dischord)
Busta Rhymes: (Elektra) — October
Cibo Matto: (Warner Bros.) — Early '99
Missy Elliott: (Elektra) — November
Enya: "Box of Dreams" Box Set (Reprise) — Late '98
Filter: (Reprise) — Early '99
Fugazi: documentary film (Dischord)
Ben Lee: (Grand Royal) — Early '99
Luscious Jackson: (Grand Royal/Capitol) — Late '98
Metallica: (Elektra) — November
New Sweet Breath: 7" Single (-ismist Recordings) — Late Sept.
Nine Inch Nails: (Interscope) — Early '99
Pennywise: (Epitaph)
Phish: "The Story of the Ghost" (Elektra) — October
R.E.M.: (Warner Bros.) — Late '98
The Rentals: "Seven More Minutes" (Maverick) — Early '99
Sebadoh: "The Sebadoh" (Sub Pop) — Early '99
Toadies: (Interscope) — Early '99
Wilco: (Reprise) — TBA '99
Neil Young: (Reprise) — Late '98

working at Homer's is a growing interest in swing music. Bands like Royal Crown Revue and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy have recently reignited interest in a genre that made its debut back in the swingin' '20's.

"The only thing that is super big and is going to be big for awhile is the new

swing/big band style," Eberspacher said. "It's been building for about a year, but within the last month it has just exploded. From 14-year-olds to 60-year-olds, people are coming in looking for anything you can dance swing to."

As a member of the local indie band Luck

of Aleia, Chasek credits local concert promoters for drawing attention to new music and, consequently, better sales for retailers.

"Knickerbockers has been bringing in a lot of good bands lately," he said. "I think that the good bands will renew people's interest in independent music."

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