

# Year in music proves diverse

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1. Tori Amos - "From the Choirgirl Hotel" (Atlantic). Phish may have the most rabid following, but Tori has Phish trumped when it comes to obsessive fans. And "From the Choirgirl Hotel" made non-Tori lovers realize what all the fuss was about. By adding a band, Amos took her musical range into the stratosphere. It was also her most lyrically honest and accessible release since "Little Earthquakes."

**Albums that are good, but I haven't scrapped up enough cash to buy them ...**

Method Man's "Tical 2: Judgment Day" gave Garth Brooks some competition saleswise; that's good enough to merit a purchase. Lucinda Williams' "Car Wheels on a Gravel Road" is a beautiful record, successfully meshing rock and country with heart. And Bela Fleck's "Daybreak" is Fleck at his most smokin'.

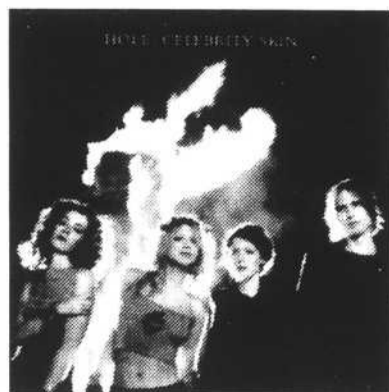
**Letdowns**

Disappointments ranged from mild gripes to pure listening hell this year. The Beastie Boys released the mildly disappointing "Hello Nasty." Don't get me wrong, "Nasty" had some brilliant elements worthy of their previous masterpieces, and it appears the boys reached another tier

of enlightenment on this album. But what the trio really needs is an editor, not karma. I've known Bruce Springsteen concerts that didn't last as long as "Hello Nasty."

Tricky and Garbage should have been 'album of the year' contenders; instead, they released their weakest

"Skin," by Hole. Honestly, if Lita Ford released this album in 1990, she would have been dogged by critics. But because Courtney Love's name is on it, critics gushed over its intentional shallowness. Fortunately, the album isn't doing as well as industry insiders expected. It is a great example of how the average consumer may have more intelligence than most rock critics. Don't believe the hype on this one.



material.

Tricky's "Angels With Dirty Faces," didn't have the heart of "Maxinquaye" or the relentless beats of "Pre-Millennium." Instead, it turned into a rant on greedy record companies. Sharpen your DJ skills, and get some moving targets to hit next time, Tricky kid.

Garbage's "Version 2.0" summed up the title perfectly. While most computer programs (Word Perfect, Netscape) are their fifth or sixth versions, Garbage seemed outdated.

And then there's "Celebrity

**Onward to the year 2000. ...**

As interesting as 1998 was to follow music-wise, 1999 will likely be one of the most interesting years for music in recent memory. After all, many artists will scurry to give their final take on the century. This includes Nine Inch Nails, Radiohead, the Fugees (maybe) and Beth Orton, a relative newcomer who is bound to score a hit with her blend of techno and folk.

Though no music act or celebrity could top the phone-tapping, DNA-stained, pizza-craving saga known as the Clinton presidential crisis for holding America's attention this past year, 1999 should prove different.

If anything, 1999 will resolve Stone Temple Pilots' Scott Weiland's legal problems. You heard it from the DN first: he will either be a) dead; b) behind bars for two years; or c) signing a lucrative 10-year contract doing the casino circuits in Vegas. Place your bets.



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