



Mark Lanegan
"I'll Take Care of You"
 Sub Pop Records
 Grade: A

Many critics have written many sentences describing Mark Lanegan's gravelly, guttural baritone of a rock 'n' roll voice, but I think a friend of mine said it best: "This guy can sing the pants off a nun."

Pantless nuns won't be the only listeners thrilled by the fourth solo album from the Screaming Trees vocalist. "I'll Take Care of You" is a collection of cover songs that lend themselves beautifully to Lanegan's rich, expressive voice.

Lanegan sounds as if he's having a

great time with the music, and this is his warmest effort yet. After the bleakness of his last album, "Scraps at Midnight," which was largely about his stint in drug rehabilitation, "I'll Take Care of You" is a shinier, if not necessarily happier, collection of songs.

"I'll Take Care of You" sounds like a road trip through the bar rooms and back alleys of the United States. Lanegan tackles the songs of forgotten or under-appreciated legends of rock, blues, jazz, gospel, soul, country, folk and punk. In doing so, he presents a guided tour of American music history — a history as important as baseball, Mom and apple pie without the sappy sentimentality.

Lanegan's choice of material is excellent and may lead to a rediscovery of some important but often forgotten artists. Unheralded folk/jazz/blues singers Fred Neil and Tim Hardin are represented and so are underrated soul artists Eddie Floyd and O.V. Wright.

Lanegan makes all these songs his own, giving the album a continuity and flow despite its stylistic shifts. He takes artists as disparate as country singer/guitarist Buck Owens and punk band the Gun Club and makes them sound as if they belong on the same album. The minimal arrangements and subtle instrumentation don't get in the way or drown any of the material. This is just a collection of simple good songs,

New Releases

left alone to be simple good songs. Organ and horns show up on a few songs, and the backing musicians include members of Dinosaur Jr., Los Lobos, Soundgarden and Screaming Trees, but they don't overpower the acoustic-based simplicity of the album.

Nearly every song is strong. "Carry Home" and "Shanty Man's Life" are somber, acoustic ballads. The title track is an organ-drenched blues. "Consider Me's" horn section highlights a playful classic soul treatment. The real highlight is "On Jesus' Program." Taking the form of a sinner crying out for redemption from Jesus, Lanegan's voice has never sounded better.

The only two missteps on the album are the traditional song "Little Sadie," a generic folk-blues, and "Badi-da," in which Lanegan duets with Mark Hoyt and only proves that he's a much better singer than Hoyt, though the song is strong enough to work anyway.

"I'll Take Care of You" is an album not unlike a favorite chair. It's a little frayed, maybe missing a leg or two, but it's lived-in, comfortable and has a lot more personality than that shiny new couch.

—Josh Krauter

New Releases



The Mr. T Experience
"Alcatraz"
 Lookout Records
 Grade: C+

Being in a punk band must be rough.

As soon as a band claims it's "punk," it is immediately judged, based on preconceived notions of what "punk" is or what it should be.

When fans latch onto a punk band, you can bet that said band had better not change up its style very much over the course of its releases, lest it be willing to embrace cries of "sellout" or "wimp."

Still, you have to grow up sometime, and the latest release by the Mr. T Experience, one of the Bay Area's most widely recognized punk exports, shows a lot of definite growth, lyrically and musically.

But that doesn't mean it's good. Dr. Frank, MTX's frontman, has always had a way with words, and "Alcatraz" is another strong lesson in how to write witty, tongue-in-cheek pop songs. The difference lyrically between "Alcatraz" and MTX's last album, "Revenge is Sweet and So Are You," is that every song isn't about a girl.

Musically, this album also illustrates a departure from "Revenge is Sweet and So Are You." The guitar employs little to no distortion throughout the entire album and

many songs break from the three-piece punk format by adding trumpets, Hammond organs, pianos and other assorted noises.

From the above descriptions, one would think "Alcatraz" must be great. Think again. For the most part, the songs sound like low-fi show tunes, like the songs on "The Simpsons." I'm just waiting for Dr. Frank to start singing about a mono-rail or Mr. Burns' fetish for clothing made from animals, such as his vest made from real gorilla chest. Songs such as "Self Pity" and "We're Not No One" are catchy but have an annoying cheesy sitcom quality that gets old real fast.

Then there are songs such as "Naomi" and "Tomorrow is a Harsh Mistress" that sound like Third Eye Blind or some other cookie-cutter top 40 band. Another problem is that Dr. Frank really can't sing very well, and songs such as "Hey Emily" and "Perhaps," where his voice is very prevalent, are almost painful.

Despite its numerous problems, "Alcatraz" does have some good points. MTX has gotten away from repetitive song structures and is playing more than just rock 'n' roll standards, which is nice. Songs such as "Two of Us" aren't groundbreaking, but they are more interesting than some of MTX's past tunes. "We'll Get By" is an interesting track but mostly because the chorus is a total Cars rip-off.

Overall, the songs on "Alcatraz" have the collective quality of a cartoon soundtrack to a not-so-interesting episode of "School House Rock." They're catchy, sort of funny, and you can really sing along to them, but once you've learned the lesson, the songs just don't rock anymore.

Kind of like the prison the album was named after.

—Jason Hardy

Dance troupe does it for love

DANCE from page 12

Maude said that if they wanted to keep performing, they really didn't have much choice.

"There would be no alternative (without the Dance Liberation Front)," Maude said. "We made this alternative because there was no alternative. We could go to Omaha and perform, but there's nothing in Lincoln we could do."

Because the group focuses on modern dance, a form not readily accessible in Lincoln, they depend heavily on the Omaha Modern Dance Collective. However, the group has found ways to perform in Lincoln. Every spring, the Dance Liberation Front holds a performance at the Wagon Train Project called "Linoma."

"Frankly, Lincoln has only one alternate space, and that's the Wagon Train Project," Cruz said. "The first 'Linoma' we sold out, but this last one was not as well attended. People tend to flock to the Lied Center or the UNL School of Music and the drama department, but they're not necessarily aware

of the fact that we have some incredible caliber dancers right here in their midst.

"We have a fantastic following in Omaha, and I think as people become more aware of us, the attendance will continue to be there."

The group's next performance is scheduled for Oct. 29 and 30 and is sponsored by the Omaha Modern Dance Collective. The show will be at 8 p.m. in the Lied Center for Education building on the Creighton campus.

Of course, with continued success also comes questions of "what now?"

Ogden, who has a master's degree from Ohio State and works in the biological systems engineering department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said finding time to rehearse is tough as it is, let alone if the group were to start performing more often.

"It is difficult. We rehearse usually in the evenings and on the weekends, so setting aside time is sometimes very tricky," Ogden said. "We are looking for other opportunities, but with our workaday lives, we can't just, la-di-da, go dancing."

"We made this alternative, because there was no alternative."

ELIZABETH MAUDE
 member of Dance Liberation Front

She said the group was interested in recruiting new members and continuing to foster a modern dance environment in Lincoln.

Regardless if they become more successful, the group still stands by its initial intent — to continue dancing and to simply have fun.

"People just need to realize that there are all levels of artistic and creative lives being led," Ogden said. "Just because you're not a professional doesn't mean you can't be singing or dancing for enjoyment."

Burning Spear brings 'vibes' to Grove

SPEAR from page 12

which allows him to tour extensively.

Rodney said retirement is in the cards in the next three or four years. But when he says "retirement," he doesn't mean dropping out of the industry and into oblivion.

"I wouldn't be touring so often, possibly wouldn't be touring so long. At some time, I'm gonna slow down. I also will be in the studio regardless, making music. So therefore, I will

always have music to present to the people," he said.

Rodney has presented his music for the last three years in Nebraska.

"Burning Spear reminds me a lot of the Rolling Stones in that he's so enduring, so consistent. This is an artist that is not a fluke. This is an artist that is committed to music," Blake said.

Being a legend, Burning Spear can tell you this much without conceit: "The people vibes me up, and I vibes up the people. You will get a great show.

Concert Preview
The Facts

What: The Burning Spear
Where: The Royal Grove, 340 W. Cornhusker Highway
When: Tonight at 9:30
Cost: \$15 at door
The Skinny: Reggae legend performs in Lincoln.

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