

romantic

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Movies, music help set the mood for kissin', buggin' and lovin'

By Samuel McKewon

Senior editor

Top 10 romantic movies of all time? Fuhgedaboutit. No way, no how.

Valentine's Day means something different for everyone, and it changes from year to year. Some of y'all are in a loving mood, some in a nasty mood, some are in a subversive mood and some are in the mood to worship the goddess of all movies, whom we'll get to in a moment.

So I'm not listing a top 10 but rather a categorical list for the lover (or hater) in everyone on the holiday. My personal grades are included.

Straight-up love - "Say Anything"

(1989) It's a tiny little film by Cameron Crowe that nearly every college girl has seen. Now you know why they all like John Cusack. The story is a simple romance between beautiful brain (Ione Skye) and everyday nice guy with no future (Cusack). The movie's about much more than that, but few notice. **B+**

Straight-up love, part II - "Pretty in Pink" (1986) Come on, you liked it. Andie (Molly Ringwald) is the girl from the wrong side o' the tracks, while Blane (Andrew McCarthy) is the rich boy with conflicts who really likes Andie. Duckie (Jon Cryer) has the hots for Andie, too. Ah, love triangles. **B**

Epic love - "Gone with the Wind" (1939) and **"Casablanca"** (1942) Heavy hitters to say the least, "Casablanca" is slightly more male-oriented, while "Gone with the Wind" plays heavy on the female side. The latter is the definitive romantic epic in history, while "Casablanca" has more of a noir-ish feel. Both get an **A**

East Campus yee-haw love - "Urban Cowboy" (1980) See it only to hear Sissy (Debra Winger) tell Bud (John Travolta) she's "gonna ride that bull." **B**

In love and war - "From Here to Eternity" (1953) Much more than just romance, it also contains one of the definitive love scenes in history, on the beach, waves crashing between Deborah Kerr and Burt Lancaster. **B+**

Obsessive love - "Vertigo" (1958) There's blondes, and then Hitchcock's blondes. Kim Novak is the object of James Stewart's affection in a film that's about little more than a few thousand dollars. Like all Hitchcock classics, it develops into weird paranoia, which is why Stewart (and Novak) were perfectly cast. **A+**

Fated love - "Romeo and Juliet" (1968) It's been made many, many times, but Franco Zeffirelli's version is the only one that remained true to the Bard's vision. It includes a stunning turn from John McEnery as Mercutio. **A**

Older man/younger woman - "Lolita" (1962) Vladimir Nabokov himself adapted one of the 20th century's greatest novels into a movie, and, considering the circumstances (it was still the 1960s, after all), he did as well as he could. Stanley Kubrick directed, and one could see he was close to the greatness he would produce in 1964 with "Dr. Strangelove." **B**

Older woman/younger man - "The Tin Drum" (1979) It's a bit misleading, but if you look at it on the surface only, it is a 3-year-old boy (David Bennet) seducing a young woman. The truth: it's Oskar Matzerah, a brilliant mind who chooses not to grow after his third birthday, which takes place amidst 1930s Nazi Germany.

Oskar sees his world collapse, his drum the only protest. This is the best Holocaust film ever made, though it largely takes place before mass genocide sets in. But it's best remembered for the sex scene; a man in Oklahoma was arrested for child pornography just for owning it. **A+**

"The Graduate" (1967) - Beyond Anne Bancroft's performance as the jaded housewife, beyond Dustin Hoffman's continued buffoonery, lies the ending, a lingering final shot from director Mike Nichols that lets the movie, which played by its own rules, end on its own ambivalent terms. A true original, with extended musical interludes from Simon and Garfunkel between major segments. **A+**

Gender-bender love - "The Crying Game" 1992 She's a man, baby. **B+**

And let us not forget the goddess of the romantic movie ... **Audrey Hepburn.**

By Josh Krauter

Staff writer

So you bought the flowers, the chocolates or the inflatable doll, and you're ready for a night of Valentine's romance.

There's just one thing missing: the music.

So, without any further ado, here's a list of the top five Valentine's Day CDs to put you and your significant other in the lovin' mood.

And for those of you without a special someone, or recently single, you haven't been forgotten, either. A top five list of depressing, anti-love CDs has been included as well. Not to men-

The Commodores - "The Ultimate Collection" - Before Lionel Richie was dancing on the ceiling, he was rocking the mike with the suave troubadours of romantic funk, the Commodores. This greatest hits collection features more than 70 minutes of love ballads ("Easy," "Three Times a Lady") and funk jams ("Brick House," "Too Hot Ta Tro.")

Barry White - "Can't Get Enough" - The mood doesn't get much sexier than when Barry White is playing. White's deeper-than-a-bottomless-well baritone is guaranteed to satisfy. This album contains the great single "Can't Get Enough of Your Love, Babe." Also recommended: White's guest appearance on the Snake Whacking Day episode of "The Simpsons," in which he uttered the immortal line, "I love the sexy slither of a female snake."

Faith No More - "Songs To Make Love To" - This four-song EP is for lovers with adventurous tastes. It features a faithful rendition of the Commodores' "Easy," as well as covers of the Dead Kennedys and the theme from "Midnight Cowboy" and a German polka song. The cover is a pair of rhinoceroses procreating the species. It doesn't get sexier than that.

Roxy Music - "Avalon" - One rock critic called this album a "make-out inferno," and anyone who hears it can see why. The Roxy boys toned down their more rocking side for their last studio album together and played up the romantic aspects of their already suave sound.

For those of you playing solo in the lonely heart's club band who feel like reveling in your misery, here's a list of five albums to get depressed to.

Top Five Depressing Anti-Love CDs (again, in no particular order)

Joy Division - "Closer" and "Unknown Pleasures" - This morbidly depressed Manchester band featured the world-weary vocals of Ian Curtis. Curtis killed himself at the age of 23, but his baritone voice sounded years older. This is very bleak stuff.

Nick Drake - "Way to Blue" and "Pink Moon" - This English folk singer overdosed on anti-depressants at the age of 26, but he left the world some memorable songs. He's not that bleak or morbid, but his songs are typified by his sad, lonely voice.

Red House Painters - "Red House Painters" - The first of this band's two self-titled albums is a long, sad trip. The cover features a black-and-white photo of an abandoned carnival, and the songs are about broken relationships, melancholy nostalgia and just plain sad stuff.

Big Star - "Third/Sister Lovers" - This band's first two albums are sunny, catchy power-pop, but its third and final album is the sound of a human being falling apart. The songs are still catchy, but a bleak, lost feeling pervades.

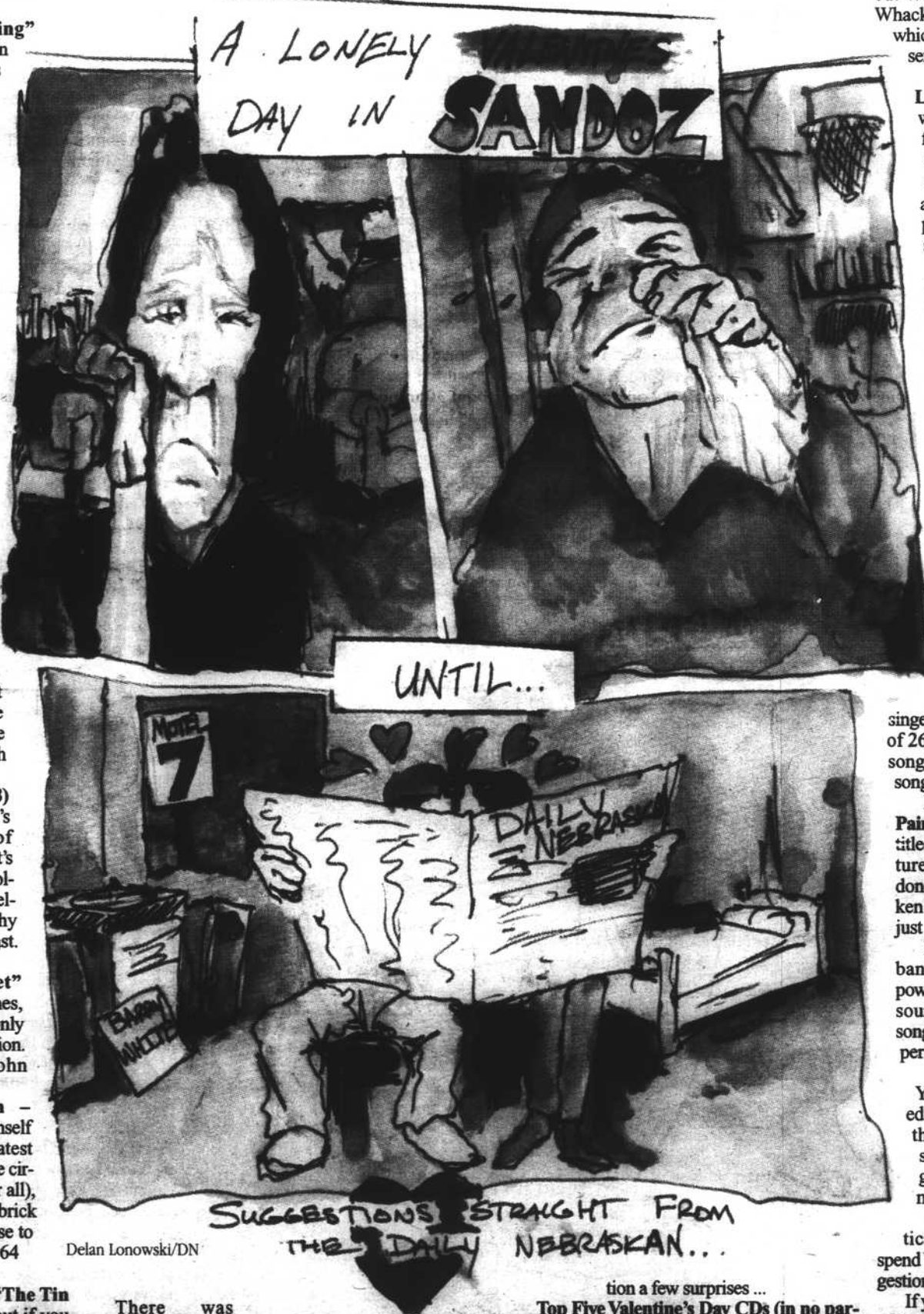
Neil Young - "Tonight's the Night" - Young lost two friends to heroin and decided to write an album about his sadness over their deaths and the way they died. The songs are full of mournful lyrics and the guitars provide plenty of lonesome melodies.

For those of you neither sad, nor romantically attached, and who are planning to spend Valentine's Day uniquely, here's a few suggestions.

If you're going to spend the holiday with a jar of Vaseline in the men's room of a truck stop, bring along a Walkman and a George Michael tape.

If you belong to a powerful political family in New England and want to seduce your children's babysitter, nothing says it better than the soothing sounds of the Dead Kennedys.

And, finally, if none of these albums represents your Valentine's mood, there's one classic album that's appropriate for any holiday, or for that matter, any time at all: Guns 'N' Roses' "Appetite for Destruction."



Delan Lonowski/DN

There was Audrey, and there was everybody else. She found instant fame with "Roman Holiday" in 1953 at age 24, and it was all roses from there: "Sabrina" in 1954 with Humphrey Bogart, "Funny Face" and "Love in the Afternoon" in 1957, "Breakfast at Tiffany's" in 1961 and "My Fair Lady" in 1964. Her career more or less ended in 1967 with her fifth Oscar nomination in "Wait Until Dark."

Hepburn's Holly Golightly in "Breakfast" could be argued as her signature role, though nobody could ever reach a consensus on the best Audrey movie. She did it better than them all.

tion a few surprises ...

Top Five Valentine's Day CDs (in no particular order)

Marvin Gaye - "Let's Get It On" and "I Want You" - The silky-smooth voice of soul legend Marvin Gaye is sure to put young lovers in the mood. These two albums represent Gaye at his romantic, horny best. But be careful which Gaye albums you slap on the turntable. "What's Going On," a downbeat album about Vietnam, racism and drugs, and "Here, My Dear," a bitter collection of vengeful songs directed toward his ex-wife, can kill the mood faster than an ill-timed interruption from a roommate.