

His Royal Badness' greatest hits... Prince's prolific reign

By Rob Clark

THE BATTALION

"The Hits"
Prince
Hip Hop/R&B
Paisley Park/Warner Bros.

Since his first album in 1978, Prince has been one of the most innovative and productive artists on the music scene. After 14 albums and numerous songs written and produced for other artists, there is finally a package of his greatest hits.

"The Hits" contains 32 of His Royal Badness' most memorable songs including favorites like "1999," "Little Red Corvette," "Kiss," "Raspberry Beret" and "7."

Nine songs are included from Prince's two best albums, "Purple Rain" and "Sign of the Times."

Four new songs are presented, including the first single, "Pink Cashmere," which has an easy mellow feel, similar to Prince's late 70s work.

"Peach" is a guitar driven jam, while "Pope" contains the hip hop sound Prince has searched for on earlier grooves like "Gett Off" and "Sexy M.F."

Perhaps the most intriguing of the new songs is Prince's own version of

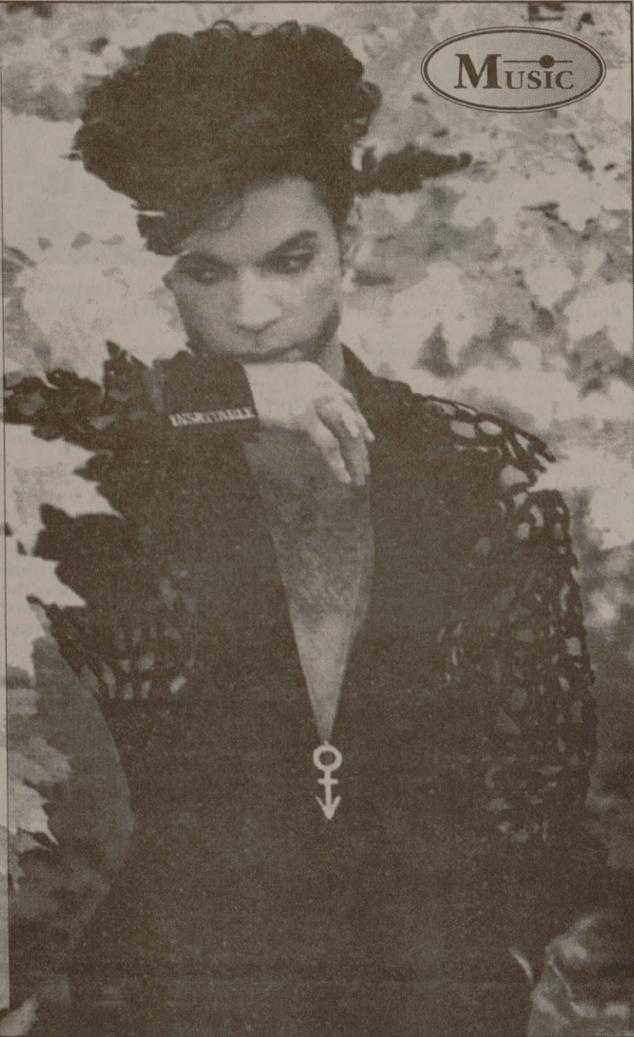
"Nothing Compares 2 U," which Sinéad O'Connor took to the top of the charts in 1990. Rosie Gaines joins Prince on this one, and they add some much needed soul to the song.

"The Hits" also contains 20 obscure B-sides to old Prince singles. Among these, "Shockadelica," "Erotic City" and "She's Always in My Hair" are standouts.

But the one that grabbed my attention was "Another Lonely Christmas." Prince deals with the torment caused by a girlfriend's death on Christmas Day seven years in the past. He sings, "Last night, I spent another lonely Christmas/Darlin' you should've been there/Of all the ones I've dreamed about/You are the one who makes my love shout/You are the only one I care for."

"The Hits" can be bought separately in two compact discs or in the three CD package with the B-sides. The box set is definitely a worthwhile buy.

Although it's hard to confine 15 years of Prince's creativity to three CDs, "The Hits" is an excellent compilation, and the B-sides are an extra bonus.



MUSIC



Nirvana — hardcore as ever

By Joe Leih

THE BATTALION

"In Utero"
Nirvana
Rock
David Geffen Company

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With their new release, "In Utero," punk trio Nirvana will definitely prove that they still have yet to go soft.

Sure, their 1991 breakthrough album, "Nevermind," sold 5 million copies in 4 months, establishing them as one of history's most commercially successful alternative bands. And of course, rumors that the Geffen label made the new album's "sound" even more accessible to the mainstream market have constantly flown about as well.

But Nirvana is — if anything — still hardcore.

Chris Novoselic drives the basslines with intense fury while drummer Dave Grohl never stops with his incessant pounding.

Even Kurt Cobain's whining and ever-so-distorted guitar play just shines with fervor.

In fact, with this new project, the members have blatantly launched themselves further into the punk ideal.

Tunes like "Milk It" and

"tourette's" disintegrate at times into random beats, chords and sporadic distortion. And still others ("Scentless Apprentice" and "All Apologies") showcase Cobain's screeching, unintelligible vocals.

The effect is mesmerizing, but occasionally a tad grating.

Nonetheless, Cobain justifies the harshness with his personal message on the invaded life of fame and success.

Constantly plagued by management, fans and a pesky media, Cobain has endured gossip and sensationalism on everything from an alleged drug addiction to domestic violence involving his wife, Courtney Love (lead singer of the rock band Hole).

On "Serve The Servants," he angrily lambastes "self-appointed judges," and on "Rape Me" he wails to his critics "Rape me, my friend/ Rape me again." And finally on "Radio Friendly Unit Shifter" he bitterly asks, "What is wrong with me?"

But thankfully, there is nothing wrong with this ardent lead singer. Well... nothing, as long as he continues to harness his anger by creating powerful albums like this one.

'Judgment Night:' slightly slammin'

By Rob Clark

THE BATTALION

"Judgment Night"
Soundtrack
Rap/Alternative
Immortal/Epic Soundtrax

Rap and rock are probably the two most rebellious forms of music today. The two have been mixed successfully before, with Run D.M.C. and Aerosmith, Public Enemy and Anthrax and of course, Ice-T's heavy metal band Body Count.

But these have all been isolated releases. Enter "Judgment Night," the soundtrack of the thriller film starring Emilio Estevez and Cuba Gooding Jr. The album is dedicated to the blend of rap and alternative rock; and some of music's top bands are represented, with some interesting results.

Vernon Reid's guitar riffs drive Living Colour's collaboration with Run D.M.C., "Me, Myself, and My Microphone." But the lyrics here are weak, with the rappers resorting to "It's like this y'all/It don't stop." Rappers as established as Run D.M.C. ought to be able to come up with something more original.



Ice-T and Tom Araya of Slayer sing "Disorder" in "Judgment Night."

Sir Mix-A-Lot's fast paced rhymes match well with Mudhoney's Hendrix-like sound on "Freak Momma."

Pearl Jam joins Cypress Hill on "The Real Thing," which seems like the album's marquee matchup. While it is a good, hard-driving song, it's not as memorable as hoped.

The best song on the album is "Fallin'" where De La Soul rappers Posdunuous and Trugoy's hippy rhymes are perfectly laid

over the fun old-school beat by Teenage Fanclub. The song tells the tale of a hip hop has-been, confused by the sudden decline of his rhyme quality. Posdunuous chants, "I lost touch with reality/ Now my personality/ Is an unwanted commodity."

Faith No More starts off "Another Body Murdered" with a quiet piano solo before exploding with the Boo-Yaa Tribe's thunderous vocals, which sound very much like Chuck D. of Public Enemy.

MUSIC

'Big Red Letter Day,' softer than grunge... Buffalo Tom's new album not overdone

By Jacqueline Ayotte

THE BATTALION

"Big Red Letter Day"
Buffalo Tom
Alternative Rock
EastWest Records America

Classic rock fans will detect a Neil Young or Rolling Stones sound. Alternative music fans will hear a little of REM or The Replacements.

Regardless of your musical passion, Buffalo Tom will satisfy your ears with their fourth album, "Big Red Letter Day."

The Boston based band's sound is similar to Toad the Wet Sprocket. It has a cool alternative feel to it, yet the guitars never strain so much you'd want to claim it as grunge.

It's in between, at a pure sounding medium. A little less poppy than Toad, yet poppier than REM. Buffalo Tom's first single "Soda Jerk" reveals

the primal, refined voice of lead singer Chris Colbourn. The lyrics create a profound sense of imagery in the mind of the listener. This song has an easy listening quality to it, with just enough core guitar sound to add alternative flavor.

"Treehouse" features female vocals revealing how Buffalo Tom can sometimes push their own boundaries. The second single "I'm Allowed" captures the band's range perfectly — rhythmical, aggressive, loud, yet never forced.

Buffalo Tom's tendency to keep their music from sounding overdone is the one quality that distinguishes them from other alternative bands.

It may seem too easy, but if "Big Red Letter Day" had to be described in two words, it would be simple... Polished roughness.

MUSIC

"Missing Link" blends the bluesy guitar of Dinosaur Jr. and the tongue-twisting rap of Del the Funky Homosapien. Del raps about being true to hip hop and his no-sellout code. He says, "I'm not discriminating myself when I make my wealth/ Pure facts — It's hard for me to endure wack MCs/ I lay my tracks with ease."

The problem with Ice T's song with Slayer, "Disorder," is the same problem with Ice's band, Body Count. Ice T is simply more effective as a rapper than as a makeshift heavy metal screamer.

Cypress Hill appears again, this time rapping about their favorite smoking leaf of choice in "I Love You Mary Jane." Despite the fact that lead rapper B-Real always sounds like he is holding his nose when he raps, the song is very funky, with Sonic Youth supplying the slow groove.

The album's weakest songs are the mixtures of Helmet with House of Pain and Therapy? with Fatal which both lack the creativity of the other tracks.

"Fallin'" and "Missing Link" alone make the album worthwhile. And while some tracks are mediocre, the album has enough creative combinations to make it work.



Tom Maginnis, Bill Janovitz and Chris Colbourn are the alternative band, Buffalo Tom.

Nelson elected to Country Music Hall of Fame 'It's about time...'

The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Willie Nelson, whose restless spirit is reflected in songs like his signature "On the Road Again," has been elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame.

He will be inducted next Wednesday night during the 27th annual Country Music Association awards telecast on CBS-TV.

Nelson, 60, was chosen by 350 electors, each of them with at least 10 years of experience working in country music.

"It's an honor to receive this award, and I'll have more to say about it when I receive it at the CMA show on Wednesday," Nelson said Tuesday evening.

One of Nelson's most prominent fans, Texas Gov. Ann Richards, said "it's about time."

"Willie Nelson is of course is a pure Texan," Richards said. "He is a man that has incredible magnetism and wonderful music, and we're real proud that he's from our state."

Country singer and longtime friend Waylon Jennings said, "I think it's long overdue."

You've heard of all-around cowboys; well, I think Willie is an all-around artist because he does it all great."

In a career spanning four decades, he has released 35 albums, sold more than 40 million records and spearheaded six "FarmAid" concerts to raise funds for financially strapped farmers.

His first success came as a songwriter in the early 1960s when he composed hits like "Crazy" and "Night Life."

As a recording artist, he has had hits such as "Always on My Mind," "On the Road Again" and "Blue Eyes Cryin' in the Rain."

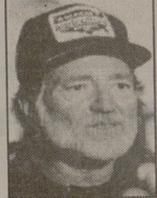
He became known for recording updated versions of classics like "Spanish Eyes," "Stardust," "Moon River" and "Some Enchanted Evening."

Nelson has one of the most unorthodox singing styles in country music. His music is known for its simple instrumentation and spare production — sometimes just Nelson and his gut-string guitar.

As a young singer, he played in rowdy Texas honky-tonks where chicken wire was erected between the stage and performers to protect entertainers from flying beer bottles.

He worked as a door-to-door salesman selling Bibles, encyclopedias and vacuum cleaners before establishing his music career. He also worked as a service station attendant, dish washer and disc jockey.

Nelson's nomination this year was his third. Other 1993 nominees were Don Gibson, Merle Haggard, Harlan Howard and Ray Price. The CMA does not release the vote totals for nominees.



Nelson