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HAVE A VALENTINE DAY

MUSIC REVIEWS

John Michael Montgomery

'Kickin' It Up' to a faster pace

By Michael Plumer

THE BATTALION

"Kickin' it Up"
John Michael Montgomery
Country
Atlantic Records

John Michael Montgomery's first release, "Life's A Dance," was a sneaky album because the greatness of it did not register until after a few listenings. Almost all of the tracks were strong to the point that the words became second nature, even if the song was not released for radio play.

Montgomery snuck onto the Nashville scene with his megahit "I Love the Way You Love Me" which caused much anticipation regarding his follow up. His second release, "Kickin' It Up," is not as ear-catching as his initial effort but it is nevertheless very ear-pleasing.

Montgomery strayed from his roots on "Kickin'" by adding more guitar riffs to his songs. The soft, sinuous voice that soothed listeners on "I Love the Way" and "Dream on Texas Ladies" is prevalent on a few tracks, but Montgomery tends to kick it up a little more on this album.

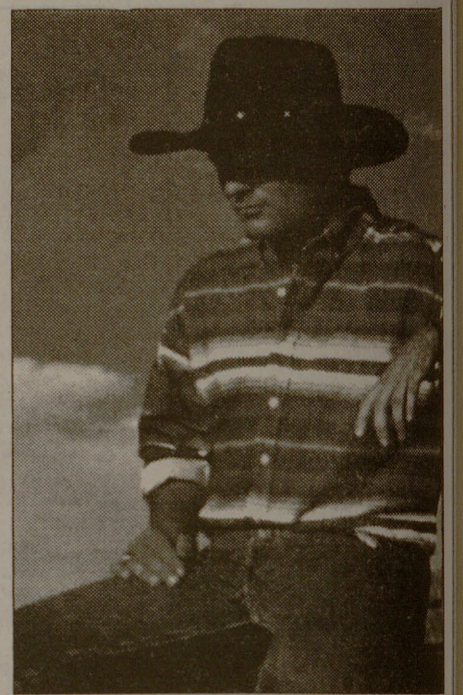
On "Be My Baby Tonight," Montgomery employs a fast-paced and almost rap-like vocal pattern and makes it work surprisingly well. But be warned.

It is the first cut on the album, so Montgomery's new vocal style is readily apparent.

Of course, there is one smash ballad, "I Swear." While not as strong as "I Love the Way," it is a catchy tune about the importance of lifelong commitment.

The Montgomery charm shows brightly through once again on "Oh How She Shines."

See Montgomery/Page 5



'Philadelphia' soundtrack: endless variety

By Jennifer Smith

THE BATTALION

"Music from the Motion Picture 'Philadelphia'"
Various artists
Film soundtrack
Epic Soundtrack

The soundtrack to the movie "Philadelphia" doesn't immediately jump up and drag you in with its legendary artists and selections.

But after listening to this collaboration for the second or third time, it's almost impossible to get it out of your compact disc player.

A diverse group of artists have come together to create a soundtrack that just doesn't seem to get old no matter

how many times it's played.

Three pieces on this 10-selection soundtrack immediately distinguish themselves from the rest of the songs.

The Indigo Girls give the best performance on the soundtrack with a powerful rendition of "I Don't Wanna Talk About It." The voices of these two women combine to give this song both a raspy and a soft sound. The duo, known as a folk group, does an amazingly good job with this sensual ballad.

Sade also gives a memorable performance with "Please Send Me Someone To Love." This sexy song is perfect for slow dancing. The blaring saxophone leaves the listener longing and searching for something more.

The most surprising of the

three outstanding songs on this soundtrack is by the Spin Doctors. "Have You Ever Seen the Rain?" is very characteristic of the Spin Doctors. It's a happy, uplifting, sing-along song.

Bruce Springsteen's "Streets of Philadelphia" takes a while to get under your skin. But once it does, there's no getting rid of it. This song characterizes Tom Hanks' struggle in the movie to prove he was fired because he has AIDS. It is a slow, spiritual song that chronicles the complete aloneness Hanks' character feels.

Neil Young also appears in this soundtrack. The title song is full of piano and Young's voice, with little else to offer the more inquisitive listener.

"Lovetown" by Peter Gabriel also stands out as a likable piece after hearing it one or two times. It has a distinctive street beat that is completely characteristic of Gabriel.

Other selections on this soundtrack include a section from the opera Andrea Chénier titled "La Mamma Morta" performed by Maria Callas and composed by Umberto Giordano, "Precedent" composed and conducted by Howard Shore, "Ibo Lele (Dreams Come True)" by Ram and "It's in Your Eyes" by Pauletta Washington.

This soundtrack can be enjoyed by anyone. It has endless variety from song to song and is especially appealing to the moviegoer who has seen "Philadelphia."

Acid jazz - young artists reclaim old genre

By Kyle Burnett

THE BATTALION

"The Acid Jazz Test Part 1"
Various artists
Modern jazz
Moonshine Music

Musicians from the street have managed to take jazz out of the elevator scene and put it into a new vibrant and exciting form.

But jazz is not reclaiming the music industry in its traditional form, it's

making a comeback in a more modern style known as "acid jazz."

Acid jazz, a few years in the making, is a fusion of funk, rap, soul, reggae and hip-hop. And the attentive listener can detect a slight influence of the once again popular disco.

This volatile mixture has exploded onto the music scene with such notable acts as Stereo MC's and Us3.

The term "acid jazz" was coined in a London nightclub several years back. Legend has it a DJ introduced a new-style jazz artist to a crowd and told the group, "This is 'acid house' and it's

going to be massive, you better get into it."

The young jazz DJ took the stage and after completing an excited performance of his record, he stated simply, "This is acid jazz."

For those who might like to look into this new form of music, "The Acid Jazz Test Part 1" offers an entertaining glimpse into the new genre.

The album is a compilation of the works of 11 different artists and groups from London, New York, Los Angeles and Paris.

See Acid/Page 5

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