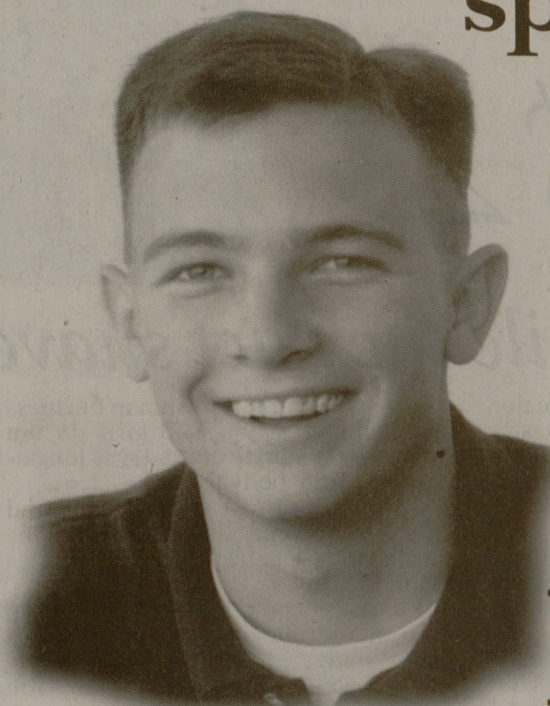


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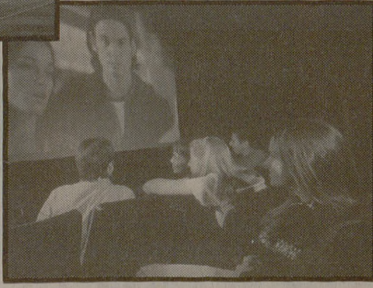


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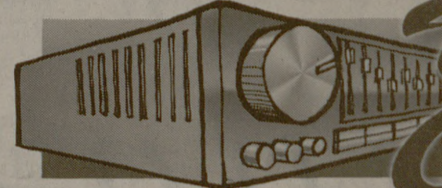
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Meshell Ndegeocello
Bitter
CD courtesy of
Maverick Recording

In Meshell Ndegeocello's new album, *Bitter*, stark truth and beauty are shown through her precise but powerful lyrics.

Without ornamentation or distractions, the music is allowed to speak for itself.

Ndegeocello honestly in a voice distinctly her own — deep, wise and self-assured.

The album, a unique mix of jazz, classical and rock does not fit into a specific genre.

The quality acoustic instrumentation on the album is woven tightly with lyrics full of emotion, making them intellectually satisfying.

The overall theme of the album is compassion — a confident response to the painful content of the tracks.

"Satisfy" best represents the style of *Bitter*. It combines poetic lyrics, graceful string accompaniment and the funky bass that made Ndegeocello famous in her 1994 collaboration with John Mellencamp.

Ndegeocello has proven she is an artist worthy of her peers' respect by creating an album that satisfies a craving for beauty and simplicity. (Grade: A)

— Emily Puder

Volume Control

Blue Highway
Blue Highway
CD Courtesy of
Celi Music, Inc.

The band Blue Highway can best be described as everything country music should not be.

This attempt by five geriatric Tennessee top the music charts sounds more like a contest than a hit album.

One after another, the tracks play like a dance soundtrack, with the hyperactive player drowning out the rest of the band and the vocalist.

The lyrics are uninspired and stick to the tried music cliché of "My horse died, my wife went to prison, and my wife left me for my buddy Jethro."

However, they did manage some help from Ann Womack on the song "Father I Know" which also happens to be the only ballad on the album.

These gentlemen should never have left Nashville and stuck to playing on Bingham because there is no room for them in mainstream music. (Grade: D)

— Melissa

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