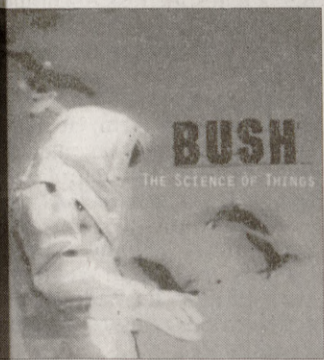


Volume Control



Bush
The Science of Things
CD courtesy of
Trauma Records

Bush has delivered an album with energy and feeling in *The Science of Things*. The group has grown and expanded both emotionally and musically since the release of *Razorblade Suitcase*. With tracks such as "The Chemicals Between Us," "Mindchanger" and "Jesus On Me," the album offers powerful sounds and insightful lyrics. Though a few of the tracks are ironically altered, making singer Gavin Rossdale's voice sound like something from a science fiction movie, the album does not suffer because of it. The charging bass lines of "The Disease of the Dancing Cats" and euphoric chords in "Letting the Cables Sleep," make the album a dynamic and stimulating piece of work. (Grade: B)

—Amanda Palm



Janice Robinson
The Color Within Me
CD courtesy of
Warner Bros.

Janice Robinson has released an album that is almost an open book to her past. All of the songs, however, are universal, so any person can listen and understand them. In "Nothing I Would Change," Robinson sings about historical dates, with an explanation of the significance of the time. This highly repetitive method actually manages to sound engaging. There is a truth throughout the album. Robinson apparently wanted to produce something that honestly portrayed peoples' everyday life occurrences. Robinson harmonizes on many of the tracks. This works, but it almost happens too often, which inevitably makes some of the songs sound repetitious. The instruments on the album aid in diminishing the signs of similarity between the tracks. In one of the most thought provoking songs,

"Gracefully Gliding," the sound of the piano is heard. The lyrics of this song are melancholy, explaining racial hatred and the detriment it puts people through. Robinson finishes the song, saying she will never be hurt again by the words of others. *The Color Within Me* is a positive album for the most part, gearing toward racial harmony and growing up. (Grade: B)

—Jeff Wolfshohl



Mariah Carey
Rainbow
Columbia Records

People either love her or hate her, but one thing can not be denied from this diva — she actually has talent. As the highest-selling and most productive artist of the '90s, Mariah continues her quest to please fans with *Rainbow*. *Rainbow*, Mariah's attempt to further explore R&B/Hip-Hop, proves to be successful. While it is

not her best album, it is definitely filled with infectious tunes destined to hit the charts and air waves. After abandoning her signature glass-shattering notes on *Butterfly*, she decided to bring them back, and did so dramatically on the track "Bliss."

Her enormous range is showcased heavily on this album. Mariah transforms from light and airy to bold and jazzy — a true vocal genius. Mariah whips out the song writing thesaurus and uses words like: incessantly, enamored and rhapsodize to convey her messages. She has already propelled the first single off the album, "Heartbreaker," to number one status with the help of featured rapper Jay-Z. "Heartbreaker" has a feel similar to that of 1995's "Fantasy," but this track gives unfortunate girls a theme for the men who won't take them back, while Jay-Z humorously describes the antics of typical boyfriend-dependent women.

Rainbow has many singing collaborations and guests from Snoop Dogg to 98 degrees and writing collaborations from the ballad queen Dianne Warren ("How Do I Live") to the deceased Tupac Shakur (his sampled lyrics are included).

With so much diversity and albums to her credit, the question is: what is left for Miss Carey?

Well after writing the soundtrack for the '90s, she is pursuing acting. But all she needs to do is continue creating fun, hip records for the world to jam to. And the

only problem with this album was its length — too short. (Grade: B+)

—Jeff Kempf



Ash
Nu-Clear Sounds
CD courtesy of
Dreamworks

The youthful UKers, Ash, are slowly chiseling an American niche, and its latest album, *Nu-Clear Sounds*, brings the sophomore rockers even closer to Apple Pie hearts.

Forming the band at only 12 years of age, the initial trio (now foursome) were heavy metal al-

ternateens when they first hit the UK charts. Since then, Ash has traded in its head banging roots for a blended indie, punk and pop-beat, which started in the early '90s once the Nirvana-nihilism trend became the ultimate flavor.

Nu-Clear Sounds is the result of the Pixie-Nirvana influence, with heavy guitar riffs and female background vocals in "Wild Song" and "Numbskull." Both are tracks which could easily be mistaken for Pixie tributes. However, the slower melancholic songs, sweetly tap into the Lou Reed portion of the brain, especially the semi-catchy "Folk Song" and "Aphrodite."

Unfortunately, there are times when the band seems to lose it. Listeners have to wonder if there isn't a black sheep in the band insisting on some of his personal favorites in return for instrumental talent. "Death Trip 21" and "Fortune Teller" are just two examples of such unpleasant musical jolts.

Overall, the bad and the good blend to equilibrate the CD, resulting in an album on its way to the American Dream but falling just two stars below the semiconscious. (Grade: C)

—Heather Brondy

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D = don't buy it F = burn in effigy

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and, i am master of my domain.

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