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Chocolate Starfish and the Hot Dog
Flavored Water
Limp Bizkit
CD Courtesy of Interscope Records

With its third CD, Limp Bizkit has shown surprising longevity for a rap-rock hybrid band. Despite the predictions of most music industry pundits, this band shows no signs of slowing down. With the exception of an atrocious medley of Nine Inch Nails hits that opens this album, it is a strong third showing. However, it should not go unmentioned that the NIN medley is probably the worst rock song ever made and Trent Reznor will probably assassinate Fred Durst for making it. That mistake aside, Chocolate Starfish and the Hot Dog Flavored Water contains some notable hits, a few of which are gaining big time mainstream airplay — no small feat for a band of Limp's style. Among those songs are "My



Generation" and "Rollin'" — two of Limp's better songs. For fans who bought Limp's first album, Three Dollar Bill Y'all, this album represents a slight change in style — namely, a lack of dark

songs. The first album had a number of songs that sounded dark and melancholy, whereas this CD is composed mainly of the upbeat, angry tracks that have become the band's trademark. This album is more complex in production than Limp's previous offerings, which adds an interesting touch to many of the new tracks. Much of this new complexity is due to guest producer Scott Weiland of Stone Temple Pilots and how much is Limp Bizkit is a determination fans will have to make for themselves. This CD certainly earns its "Parental Advisory" warning, with each song containing explicit lyrics numbering in the double digits. The fan-hearted should avoid this offering, but gutter punks and people who ate paint chips as children should pawn their last Smith's 7-inch to get a copy of it. (Grade: B-)

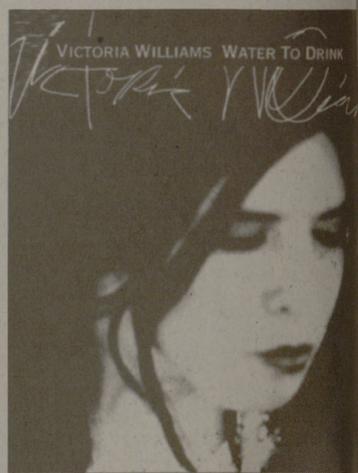
— Jason Bennett

Water To Drink
Victoria Williams
CD courtesy of Atlantic Records

Victoria Williams' off-kilter, squeaky vocal style may keep her from attaining huge appeal. The folk-like singer/songwriter's best-selling album was, ironically, a tribute album featuring Pearl Jam, Soul Asylum, Matthew Sweet and others singing her songs; it barely featured the Louisiana-born performer at all. What those artists knew — and an expanding audience soon discovered — is that she is a songwriter and performer of aural landscapes and child-like wonder. At times, Williams' warbling voice gets in the way of her vivid songwriting, but her latest album, Water To Drink, is her strongest and most consistent effort to date. "Light the Lamp Freddie" and "Joy of Love" are standout tracks with instant appeal. Bouncing doo-wop-style brass and upbeat melodies accompany the best songs about philosophy, love and a grandmother's hatpin.

Some confusing mistakes are made on Water To Drink, namely, the inclusion of covers like the old-time standard "Young At Heart" and "Until the Real Thing Comes Along." She even named the album after another cover tune, "Water To Drink." Williams' strongest traits are her storytelling abilities and the catchy, memorable lyrics she uses to tell them. She does not add anything new or exciting to these old standards, so why put them on the album? Water To Drink should give Williams' fans more stellar songwriting to enjoy, but most listeners will like covers of her songs better. Williams' storytelling is augmented by her own life story, which includes a battle with the debilitating neurological disorder multiple sclerosis. Her battle with the disease inspired Sweet Relief, a collaboration album of rock's top performers to help defray the costs of her escalating health bills.

— Hillary Gant



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