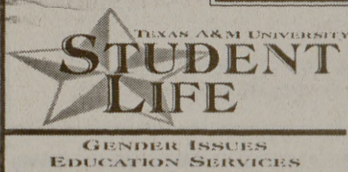


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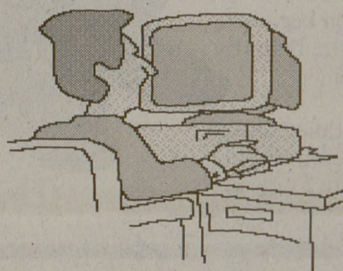
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Using the World Wide Web for Research

Texas A&M University Libraries is offering a class to assist Texas A&M University students and faculty in using the World Wide Web for research.

Session I - Introduction to Using the World Wide Web for Research

Day	Date	Time	Location
Tuesday	Jan 23	5:30 - 6:00 pm	Student Computing Center, 114
Wednesday	Jan 24	5:45 - 6:15 pm	Student Computing Center, 114
Thursday	Jan 25	5:30 - 6:00 pm	Student Computing Center, 114

Session II - Beyond the Basics - Using the World Wide Web for Research

Day	Date	Time	Location
Tuesday	Jan 23	5:30 - 6:00 pm	Student Computing Center, 114
Wednesday	Jan 24	5:45 - 6:15 pm	Student Computing Center, 114
Thursday	Jan 25	5:30 - 6:00 pm	Student Computing Center, 114

Bring a 3.5 formatted high density disk if you want to save information.
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Blender
 Collective Soul
 Atlantic Records

On its fifth attempt, Collective Soul has accomplished the task of sounding just like Collective Soul.

Sometimes, bands get in a creative rut and sound the same every time they release a new album. But, when you have a sound as good as Collective Soul, why change?

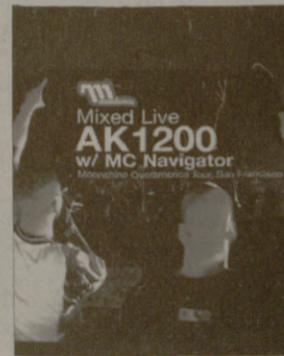
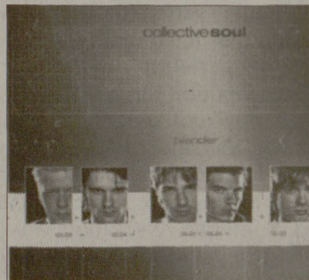
"Why, Part 2," Blender's first single, has hit mainstream and made its way into frequent rotation. With its distinctive guitar riffs by Ross Childress and Dean Roland, and the unique sound of front man and songwriter Ed Roland, the single is on its way up the charts.

Elton John makes an appearance on the track "Perfect Day." The song has a very 70s disco basis and is very much John's style. This track actually sounds more like a pop song than music Collective Soul usually plays.

Another stand-out track is "Happiness." The last song on the album features a much harder sound than the rest of the album and ends it with a bang. The track borders on a more classic sound with braver guitar riffs.

The album's title has an interesting origin. In order to come up with an original title for the album, Collective Soul started an online contest and asked its fans for their ideas. The band chose Blender from five possibilities taken from more than 12,000 entries. Overall, this album is a good, head-bobbing display of Collective Soul's ability to recreate its previous success with new lyrics and new, yet distinctively Collective Soul, guitar riffs.

(Grade: A-)
 —Brooke Hodges



Mixed Live
 AK 1200 with
 MC Navigator
 CD Courtesy of
 Moonshine Music

AK 1200 proves to be an excellent performer with Mixed Live's superb track selection, mixing and production. Unfortunately, MC Navigator, the vocalist for the album, does nothing to increase the value of the CD.

AK 1200 plays some great tracks on this CD, from DJ Kontrol's hard-banging "Forcefield," to DJ S's melodic "Lighter Remix." Throughout the CD, AK 1200 throws in scratches, flares and cuts, to great effect. This is a great, high-energy album, but it lacks real flow between lows and highs. AK 1200 might be faulted for this lack of flow, but this faux pas cannot be overlooked, considering the quality of the songs and disc jockeying. The album also incorporates the crowd reaction, adding a welcome live feel.

On the downside, MC Navigator's emceeing is tired and cliché. Navigator uses the Rastafarian-influenced vocal style so common in the drum 'n' bass genre that has become an ever-present nuisance to anyone who enjoys the music. Navigator alternately drones on too long and grows silent too long, with no apparent musical reason or theme for his presence. To top it all off, his microphone is so loud it nearly drowns out the music. However, there are short bursts where Navigator adds to the album — during Total Science's "Make Me Feel," for instance — but they are few and far between.

This album is worth having for hardcore drum 'n' bass enthusiasts, but other listeners will be too annoyed by Navigator to enjoy the music.

(Grade: B-)
 —Jason Bennyhoff

Relentless Beats Vol. 1
 Mistress Barbara
 CD Courtesy of Moonshine Music

Mistress Barbara's name is a play on the words "miss" and "stress," indicating her ability to whip a crowd into a frenzy. Given the quality of her new CD, the name seems apt.

Mistress Barbara's disc jockeying on this CD revolves around one concept — speed. She mixes a whopping 22 songs, with an introduction and conclusion track, into the CD's 74 minutes. Mistress Barbara is renowned as a techno producer, and Relentless Beats marks her entry into the world of major-label mix CDs.

Combining her brand of hard, minimal techno with fast mixing, Barbara has created an excellent CD worthy of emulation by any DJ. She begins the CD with banging, fast tracks and moves slowly into more downtempo house and tech-house tracks.

The album opens energetically to the sound of Prada heels clicking on a hard floor and then into UmeK's melodic, yet linear "Voltaren." The CD quickly gains momentum and reaches its apex with two tracks by Deetron, the vocal "Don't You Know Why" and the electro-styled "Silk Cut." She then mixes into Steve Stoll's "Hustler," an almost beat-breaking track. This series alone, with Barbara's quick style, makes the CD worth a listen for any techno enthusiast.

What really sets the CD apart is the slow decline into housey, melodic songs. After the frantic pace of the album's first half, the more mellow second half of the CD gives the listener a welcome break.

The only weak point of the CD is the lack of tricks. Barbara's energetic style is brilliant in live performances due to her manipulation of the music and stage presence — neither make it onto the CD.

(Grade: A-)
 —Jason Bennyhoff



Haunted
 Poe
 Atlantic Record Co.

The recently released Haunted is the album composer-singer-producer Poe wanted to make for as long as she can remember. The ethereal, if not spooky, CD is what she calls "a journey toward intimacy" in reconnecting with her dead father.

Though a handful of tracks are driven by the same angst, feminine energy that gave her 1995 debut album Hello such accolades, the feel of Haunted is entirely different. It is dramatic and serious, strange and symbolic. Many of the songs lapse into haunted-house-like sound effects: the dialing of a phone, a child's isolated voice, old cassette tape recordings of her father's voice. These effects create the intended ghostly and provocative atmosphere, but they do not make for a very fluid disc that can be played over again.

The music floats and has sweeping silences punctuated by Poe's nymph-like voice or hard guitar playing, accompanied by her rough, feminine bitterness. Poe is one of those beautiful fairies in the movie Labyrinth who appear so delicate, yet bite with a vengeance. Poe has a breathy intensity that makes her as formidable as Coney Love without being so abrasive.

"Control," "Walk the Walk" and "Not a Virgin" are most like Poe's first album, Hello. The songs all have that infectious, warrior-woman style that created Poe's loyal fan base in 1995. "Not a Virgin" is especially so as Poe flirts with the virginity metaphor to assert that she is not naive or gullible anymore and will not stand to be patronized or protected any longer.

Haunted contains more depth than Hello and more of Poe's emotions. Her honest, heartfelt composition will undoubtedly move many, but it lacks the variety and variety needed to capture her target audience. Woody Allen movies, personal tributes to late family members are not for everyone.

(Grade: B-)
 —Brooke Hodges

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