

Jewish Legend. Josh Reichmann frantically belts out, "I've been really institutionalized," on "Second Attention." That line sticks throughout the rest of the record because, after listening, you realize you've just been tossed around the mosh pit of this mad musical scientist's brain. Eastern European influences and hilariously odd instruments run rampant on this giddy LP, while the lyrics challenge the listener with stories and personal demons. A handful of Reichmann's voices make appearances on the sitar call-and-answer party, "Cyclops (Have I Not Been)," and the cartoon romp, "Chest Weights." But midway through, *Telepathy Now!* gets a bit confusing. The chaotic "Levitate The Nest," which features trumpet-orchestra keyboard stabs and Reichmann's annoyingly layered vocals, and the almost unlistenable "Sticky Time" make *The Jewish Legend* a sometimes noisy mess. www.baudelairelabel.com—PV

CCC½

THE LUMINOLS *Idiots Delight* (MapleMusic/Universal)

This Oakville, Ontario trio are the perfect opening band. They rock relatively hard, they're accessible, their influences can be easily traced and they're as non-threatening as ducks. The only problem is, they're likely to be forgotten by the time the headliner comes on. Likewise, *Idiots Delight* proves hardly memorable by its conclusion. The Luminols make all the important mainstream rock pit stops in every song. The Ramones are pillaged on "I Don't Wanna Be A Robot," AC/DC get a nod on "Obsolete" and "Riffola" has a distinctly Foo Fighters-esque ring on its chorus. Factor in Dan Haslett's way-too-clean vocals and you've got a briefly enjoyable but altogether forgettable album. www.luminols.com—SJ

CC½

NELLIE MCKAY *Pretty Little Head* (Hungry Mouse/Fontana North)

Jazz-pop oddball Nellie McKay lobbied Columbia to release her 2004 debut as a double CD, which they did, and it was critically lauded. She then asked for its follow-up, *Pretty Little Head*, to get the same treatment, and the label balked. The ensuing fight got her dropped from Columbia. Considering it clocks in at an hour total, it's a little hard to understand all the fuss over packaging. But, a year later, the newly independent McKay has finally gotten the album out her way, and it's good. The smoky-voiced twentysomething still writes in equal parts smart and smart-ass. A little more laid back this time around, she's no less stylistically scatter-brained, genre-hopping her way through 23 tracks of piano balladry, cabaret, Latin grooves, hip-hop rhythms, French pop and yodelling. On one track, she throws together harmonica, a light reggae beat and guest vocalist K.D. Lang. The jarring jumble often works when all logic says it shouldn't. www.nelliemckay.com—DMc

CCC½

ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES *Love Their Country* (Fat Wreck/FAB)

Though NØFX have been Xeroxing the same album for the last few years, Me First And The Gimme Gimmes' "punk covers of unlikely songs" shtick never gets old. On their sixth full-length, the supergroup tackle country classics by artists such as Johnny Cash, Garth Brooks, Willie Nelson and Kenny Rogers. As with all the Gimme Gimmes' albums, the real treat is picking out snippets of punk tracks in the arrangements of the covers. For example, there's a recognizable Clash riff in Kris Kristofferson's "Sunday Morning Coming Down." The renditions are all done in stock punk form, but hearing "Lookin' For Love In All The Wrong Places" with buzzsaw guitars and double-time drumming is infinitely entertaining. www.gimmegimmes.com—SJ

CCC½

MOSES MAYES *Second Ring* (Dublum/Fusion III)

Winnipeg funk collective Moses Mayes' debut full-length is a dance record packed with horns, beats, electric guitars and keys, and will mostly be appreciated by jam band fans. There are some fun samples scratched into the funk set and the production doesn't make the record sound cheap or fleeting. But *Second Ring's* forgettable guest vocalists and wank-off instrumentals sound dated in a style that will surely only move people during a blazing live show, something MM are known for. There are a couple disco moments ("Tell Me," "Space And Time (Elevation)") and live string arrangements that pick up the record's lounge vibe. Unfortunately, *Second Ring* is merely destined to perk up the ears of the group's already existing fans. They'll have a hard time getting new ones due to their not-so-fresh take on the jam-rock genre. www.mosesmayes.com—PV

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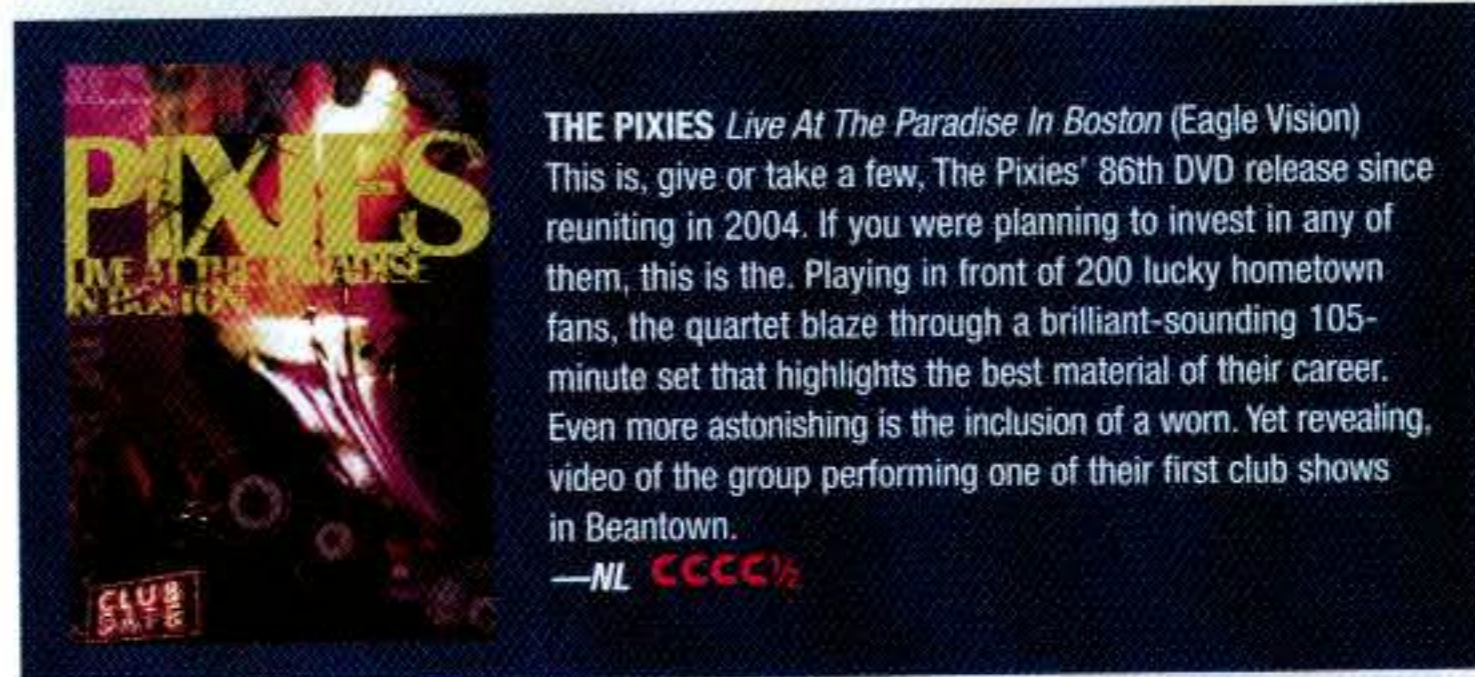
MY LATEST NOVEL *Wolves* (The Worker's Institute)

One should expect the music of My Latest Novel to have a slight literary flavour. *Wolves*, the Scottish quintet's debut album, is lyrically chatty, folksy, meandering and full of sunny harmonies coated in a noticeably thick burr (a detail often strangely absent from certain other Scottish indies). In other words, My Latest Novel live up to their moniker. It's easy to imagine band members tooling around Glasgow in a bookmobile or standing nondescript in the front row of a Spearmint concert, singing along nebbishy. The band are also part of a rapidly growing sub-genre of indie rock acts brandishing a rousing and emotive orchestral sound. Most of My Latest Novel's songs betray a distinctly British sensibility by beginning as playful, twee ditties and building gradually. Expansive strings, glockenspiels and choirs often take over, with anthemic results. www.mylatestnovel.com—KR

CCC½

PERE UBU *Why I Hate Women* (Smog Veil/KOCH)

Pere Ubu are one of the most enduring U.S. art-rock outfits, and with their 15th proper studio



THE PIXIES *Live At The Paradise In Boston* (Eagle Vision)
This is, give or take a few, The Pixies' 86th DVD release since reuniting in 2004. If you were planning to invest in any of them, this is the. Playing in front of 200 lucky hometown fans, the quartet blaze through a brilliant-sounding 105-minute set that highlights the best material of their career. Even more astonishing is the inclusion of a worn, yet revealing, video of the group performing one of their first club shows in Beantown.
—NL CCC½



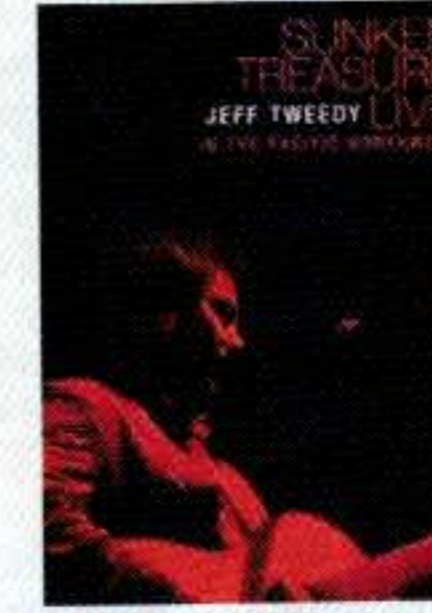
NEKO CASE *Live From Austin, TX* (New West/Fontana North)
Neko Case sounds great on record. But live, she can be transcendent. The power of her incredible voice sends chills up your spine as she weaves her way through songs. This performance, taped in 2003 for the *Austin City Limits* television show, captures this feeling only somewhat. The parameters of the program don't allow her personality and sense of humour to shine through as much as it does when she's not restrained by time, but damn this woman can sing.
—SM CCC



PUT THE NEEDLE ON THE RECORD (REM Entertainment/MVD)
Are you tired of people laughing and kicking you whenever you accidentally call two-step trance? If so, *Put The Needle On The Record* might teach your ignorant ass a thing or two about electronic music and culture. If you're the jerk doing the kicking, however, you might wish the documentary dug deeper into the music's history, artists and audience. But even if this doesn't enlighten everyone, the film's extensive interviews and fun, flashy footage are entertaining.
—JS CCC



THE ROLLING STONES *Truth And Lies* (Eagle Media)
Everyone on the planet is at least a casual Rolling Stones fan, considering their ridiculous number of hits; and this DVD is made for the most casual among us. Zooming through the band's 45-year career in 55 minutes, this short doc screams "Stones For Dummies," complete with TV special-type narration by talking head journalists. If you already know the band's history, you won't learn anything new, though snippets of archival footage in the extras are worth a glance.
—DMc CC



JEFF TWEEDY *Sunken Treasure/Live In The Pacific Northwest* (Nonesuch/Warner)
Jeff Tweedy fronts Wilco, but this year the singer-songwriter embarked on a stripped-down solo tour. Performances from five different cities, along with backstage footage shot in each town, are captured here. Tweedy is a master craftsman, and his songs stand up just fine without a full band. His witty between-song banter, including admonishments of chatty audience members and acknowledgments of his time spent in rehab, adds an insightful personal touch to this collection.
—SM CCC½



WAKE UP SCREAMING: A VANS WARPED TOUR DOCUMENTARY (MVD)
Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes at one of the biggest touring summer festivals? *Wake Up Screaming* is a short documentary that gives you a brief look at everything that goes on during an entire summer of Warped Tour, both onstage and off. The backstage antics are humorous, but the film focuses too much on the rigours of touring that we've already heard about from countless other sources. The DVD needs less of Hawthorne Heights whining and more in-depth backstage interviews.
—SJ CC½