

CARIBOUandorra



albumreview

Caribou
Andorra
Merge Records

LIZ DURDEN
Arts & Entertainment Writer

If the idea of a “one-man band” brings forth the image of someone marching around strumming a guitar, stomping his feet with a bass drum and cymbals attached to his back and a harmonica in his mouth, think again. Dan Snaith creates a new name for flying solo on *Andorra*, using a kaleidoscope of sounds to create trippy-but-relaxing harmonies all by his lonesome.

While *Andorra* may be his first album on Merge Records, Snaith is by no means a newcomer to the game. Since shedding the moniker Manitoba and adopting the equally

Canadian reference of Caribou, he has evolved and developed his easy-breezy psychedelic pop sound as shown on this latest compilation. Fans of Caribou will likely find the album a consistent effort, combining carefully selected melodies, retro guitar riffs, and subtle lyrics intertwined with varied and original beats.

“Desiree” is a lighthearted, dreamy sort of song using floating vocals, strings, and a bit of flute and chimes thrown in to soothe you into a gentle trance. The most enchanting song on the album is “She’s The

One,” which starts out with staccato vocals and moves into a melodic-trance ballad.

Snaith’s work is often compared to the Brian Wilson; one will find with this album a strong semblance to the Beta Band, a comparison that is undeniable in tracks like “Niobe.” The last and longest song on *Andorra* has a sound quality that makes one feel they’re listening to a slower, airier version of “It’s Not Too Beautiful.”

As an album, *Andorra* is rather uniform, with understated vocals layered into a musical blend of percussion, sampled songs, and synths. It provides rather unobtrusive background music, not quite upbeat enough to make you dance, but not uninteresting enough to make you turn it off. The artificial sounds of the synth give a twist to innocent poppy melodies, giving an experience otherwise only induced by a tab of LSD—that, or a glass of warm milk.



albumreview

Jamie T
Panic Prevention
Virgin

CAROLINE LAVOIE
Arts & Entertainment Writer

The British invasion strikes again with Jamie T and his debut album *Panic Prevention*. The album plays tribute to his past panic attacks, and this eclectic album does the name justice, with songs that jump from folk to rap to rock to alternative and back.

Openers “Brand New Bass Guitar” and “Back In The Game” promise an album unlike anything else, and Jamie T delivers in his genre-hopping. Punctuated with sound bites

of him and his pals swearing, this is more than an album—it’s like sitting around, bullshitting with your friends, but if you were English and called them “mates.”

Instead of just singing about being drunk, Jamie T actually sounds as if he’s had one too many on “Calm Down Dearest,” with words that slur together in the beginning of the song. The poetic melody of the string orchestra is a beautiful undercurrent

to the lyrics about a tough night of getting drunk and stumbling around London.

Unfortunately, *Panic Prevention* loses its drunken balance further along, and anxiety sets into Jamie T’s voice in “Dry Off Your Cheeks.” The vocals sound as though he’s been crying for hours—or maybe he’s just tired of recording this album by track nine. Maybe this Brit needs to drink some tea and honey to soothe his voice, take a break, and pick up in the morning.

Panic Prevention isn’t without public acclaim; it was nominated for 2007’s Mercury Music Prize and won the Best Solo Artist at the 2007 Shockwave NME Awards. It’s a great debut with songs like “Salvador,” “Calm Down Dearest,” “So Lonely Was The Ballad,” and “If You Got The Money” that are the diamonds in Jamie T’s rough voice.



albumreview

Picastro
Whore Luck
Polyvinyl

KRYSTINA SULATYCKI
Substitute Photo Editor

If Picastro’s latest album is titled after luck that leaves you turning tricks for dollars, is it even worth the trouble of listening to? Should you choose to chance a listen, you’ll discover that *Whore Luck* has some quality instrumentation, unusual effects, and a few other redeeming features. However, these paltry goods are outweighed by the immense piles of garbage that you have to sift through to get to them.

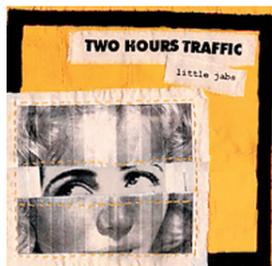
The redeeming qualities of *Whore*

Luck begin with the prominent use of the cello. The sorrowful instrument is used to great effect, both as an underlying harmonic element and as a melodic forefront. The vocals are unique, although their role is often ambiguous, at times dominating and at others taken over by the instrumental harmony. The songs themselves achieve success in a few rhythmically interesting and dynamic passages.

Unfortunately, the interesting

tidbits are spaced out by virtual seas of repetition. Repeating the same chord over and over again in the exact same rhythmic pattern doesn’t make quality music. Echo and distortion alone can’t redeem the soundscapes they’re trapped in, either. Such artistic decisions might have been intentionally planned, or they could just be mistakes that made it to tape—it’s impossible to tell. Only the cello could be called a success on this album.

Granted, there are times when Picastro do manage to maintain 20 or so seconds of well-intentioned, well-received tunes. However, there are minute-long periods where you wonder why you’re still listening. There is some real potential here for great music. Unfortunately, for now, potential is all Picastro’s got—and an album that lives up to its title.



albumreview

Two Hours Traffic
Little Jabs
Bumstead Records

MARIA KOTOVYCH
Arts & Entertainment Staff

The ’60s gave birth to a brand of catchy, carefree pop music that convinced young people that all was right with the world. The Beach Boys spearheaded this movement, singing about cruising, surfing, and girls. This influence is very apparent in Two Hours Traffic’s newest release *Little Jabs*.

The album is catchy and upbeat,

mixing folk and pop beats with the best falsetto harmonies since “Good Vibrations.” The album throws in vocal influences from the likes of The New Pornographers and REM; the result is an absolutely fantastic album from a very talented and creative band.

“Jezebel” wins the prize for channeling a jiving ’60s rock & roll groove,

and “Backseat Sweetheart” has the clearest New Pornos influence, yet still manages to retain Two Hours Traffic’s own voice and style. “Stuck for the Summer” is a made-for-sunshine song that should be heard ringing out from convertibles as the passengers’ heads bob and their hair blows in the breeze.

The album mixes these fun, fast tracks with several slower and more soulful pieces. “Arms Akimbo” is a striking example: the falsetto harmonies are in full bloom, a touch that adds a delightful and welcome texture.

Many modern artists have forgotten that the falsetto is a technique they can use; fortunately, Two Hours Traffic have brought this back in a very, very sexy way.

Are you the
Next Great
Innovator?

The Challenge: Describe an innovation, idea or concept that Canadian Financial Institutions should consider to make it easier for clients to do business with us.

The Reward: More than \$45,000 in prizes for the top five teams!

more than
\$45,000
in prizes
available

For full details, visit www.nextgreatinnovator.com

REGISTER YOUR TEAM NOW!



RBC
Financial
Group

Registered trademark of Royal Bank of Canada. RBC Financial Group is a registered trademark of Royal Bank of Canada.

Are You Exceptional?
Are You Looking to
Make a Difference?

We are looking for exceptional people with a genuine passion for what they do – and we reward them. We offer competitive rewards, flexible work schedules, fitness subsidy, technical training and more.

With over 1,600 professionals in 45 offices worldwide, Jacques Whitford is one of the largest employee-owned engineering, environmental and earth sciences companies in Canada. We are recognized as one of Canada’s top employers by Maclean’s Magazine and the Financial Post.

Visit www.jacqueswhitford.com and click on the careers section to make a difference today.

**Jacques
Whitford**

Exceptional People,
Exceptional Service,
Exceptional Solutions...
An Exceptional
Working Environment