

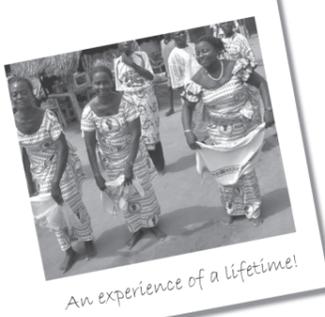
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**12, 2008**  
Humanities  
Centre  
HC 1-7  
3:30 pm -  
5:00 pm

Director,  
Center for Canadian-  
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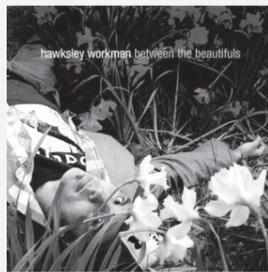
Light refreshments follow.

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## featured album

### Hawksley Workman

*Between the Beautifuls*  
Isadora Records

BRYAN SAUNDERS  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Whether he's writing love letters to his imaginary muse, Isadora, in the personals section of a magazine or recording music in a one-room schoolhouse, Hawksley Workman is famous for his eccentricity and dramatic flare.

It's disappointing, then, that the creative energy that gives Hawksley's work its usual flavour and appeal is sometimes lacking in his newest album, *Between the Beautifuls*. Tracks like "Prettier Face," "September Lily," and, fittingly enough, a track entitled "It's Not Me," don't sound like typical Workman fare at all. These songs are regrettably and uncharacteristically

subtle and generic, and could have been produced by any male singer-songwriter out there. In Workman's own words, "It's not me / I don't usually do this / It's not me / I'm not usually like this."

That said, if these aforementioned songs had the name of any other artist attached to them, they would be considered gems. However, because Workman has previously set such a high bar for himself, these songs fall short of his usual standard, and may be a disappointment to any longtime fans.

Fortunately, there are a number of extraordinary songs on this record that

do measure up on his creative yardstick. Songs like "Alone Here," "The City is a Drag," and "Piano Blink" are all remarkable, and show that Hawksley is still quite capable of pushing the envelope. The bonus Los Manlicious remix of "Piano Blink" at the end of the album is especially exuberant in an incredibly smooth way that only the quirky Canadian can pull off.

If any doubts remain, the lyrics of the explosive "Pomegranate Daffodil" quickly put them to rest. Without a doubt, this track displays the lyrical style, the over-the-top singing, and the instrumental mastery that are Hawksley's hallmark. He opens the track singing the words "Don't fuck around anymore" and quickly takes his own advice by delivering the kind of remarkable performance that listeners have come to expect of him.

Listen to tracks from *Between the Beautifuls* on the *Editor's Playlist* at [www.thegatewayonline.ca](http://www.thegatewayonline.ca)



## albumreview

### Scarlet Sins

*Scarlet Sins*  
Independent

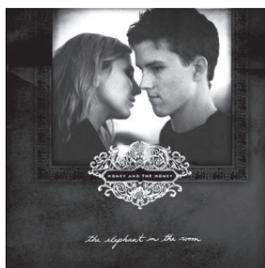
PAUL KNOCHER  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Try and say "all-female metal band" and not laugh. I dare you. I double dog-dare you because you can't. In a world where people used to describe Avril Lavigne as "punk rock," the concept of a legitimate quartet of rocking females is an absurdity. Or at least it was.

Scarlet Sins fill their self-titled debut album with a heavy bass, plenty of dark lyrics, and music that's just generally best played loud. But the band is still able to switch up into a little slower fare in "With You" or "Broken" while still keeping their own distinct metal sound.

Lead vocalist Sylva Nuvynska is really what will hook you to the band, as she certainly doesn't have a stereotypical voice for a female singer. That's because it works perfectly for rock instead of pop, though you begin to feel like her vocals are eclipsing some of the band's other musical talent after a while. This is especially true in "Reborn," where an awesome guitar solo seems to stop short for the vocals to cue back in.

The album isn't without its low points, like the stereotypical filler song "Backstabber." However, it's far from deserving mockery and worth checking out to see how well the fairer sex can rock out when they do it properly.



## albumreview

### Honey and the Money

*The Elephant in the Room*  
Independent

GARY ALLEN  
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Honey and the Money doesn't sound like an indie act, but independent they are. Their album, *The Elephant in the Room*, sounds more like something released by a contestant from *American Idol*: hopelessly bland in an attempt to offend the least amount of people. Earnest is the best way to describe the album; the vocals are as grating as Emmy Rossum's smile.

*The Elephant in the Room* is the first

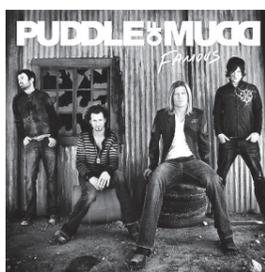
full-length album from Leila Harrison and Matt Clarke, who originally went by the name Madisen. The band's website describes the album as "filled with hooks," but they have obviously never heard songs like "Biology" by Girls Aloud that define the term hook-laden.

There are a few bearable songs on the album: "Back to Your Friends" is still overly full of emotion, but the "Every Breath You Take"-inspired

guitars keep the song moving so you can at least see the end coming. "Heartless Romantic" also manages to make the emotion work for the first time on the album, with lush strings and excellent production value. The production on the album as a whole is generally good, but it's nothing to get excited about.

In the end, the real elephant in the room is that this album is completely unnecessary. When you buy an independent album, you expect a sound that you wouldn't find at a big record label; *The Elephant in the Room* sounds like a Carrie Underwood album, albeit dislocated from Nashville.

If that's your thing, buy *The Elephant in the Room*, as Honey and the Money are competent musicians, and your money's better spent on them than stuffing Simon Cowell's pockets.



## albumreview

### Puddle of Mudd

*Famous*  
Geffen Records

BEN STANFORD  
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Puddle Of Mudd is a Missouri-based grunge band with a signature sound they just can't shake, especially on their new album *Famous*. POM haven't changed from previous albums *Control* and *Life On Display*, shown by the generic lyrics and exact same rhythm of every track on every album. They sound like Nirvana, but the lyrics are bland and terribly unoriginal, consisting of songs about wealth ("Famous"), being

nonconformist ("Living On Borrowed Time"), and being accepted ("Merry-Go-Round"), but with the majority being about girls.

That said, they may not have original sound or lyrics, but musically, they're still great. The grunge riffs are clean, with some tight, throaty vocals. The song that originally piqued my interest was their single "Psycho" because of the extremely catchy intro and the

differing sound, which is surprising for POM. "Psycho" borders on mainstream rock, but within that genre, it sounds refreshingly different from the Nickelback clones on the radio today.

"Moonshine" quickly becomes the stand-out track—lyrically, it's just another song about comforting a girl, but it has great guitar work with great picking—and "Thinking About You," a slow rock song, is hands down better than any generic slow-rock number, showcasing Wes Scantlin's impressive vocals. The equally-excellent guitar makes the song, with awesome chord progressions and a dramatic sound that leads you through the weak lyrics. So although the band still hasn't changed, if you liked Puddle of Mudd from their previous albums, this one won't let you down.