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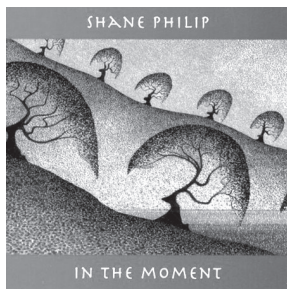
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**albumreview**

Shane Philip
In The Moment
Independent

KATHLEEN BELL
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Shane Philip is an ambitious little hippie. The multi-instrumentalist's third album, *In the Moment*, is a shifty creature, trolling the width and breadth of the ever-expanding folk music genre for inspiration. As a result, it would be hard to tell which songs on this whopping 15-track album (16 if you count the hidden track) belong on the same CD, except for two binding characteristics: being a general worship of all

things earthy, and the conspicuous presence of the didgeridoo.

The deep, scratchy moan of this Australian instrument, best known for being fun to say, entwines itself into everything from the reggae-inspired "Same Road" to the gentle guitar picking on "Serenity." Think Bob Marley—with a didgeridoo. Or Jack Johnson—with a didgeridoo. There's even "Push on Through," which seems to be a series of phone

messages left for Philip by like-minded citizens concerned about the environment—set atop a warbling didgeridoo, of course.

As fun as the didgeridoo is (both the word and the instrument), the novelty wears off at around the third listen. Since the rest of the album travels a well-worn path between mild island sounds, toned-down country, and beachy acoustic, Philip is guilty of contributing to musical erosion.

Still, if you dream of going tripping through a field of daisies when spring finally crawls across the Prairies and shakes off the shivers of winter, be sure to load *In the Moment* onto your iPod before you go. However, jaded urbanites be warned: if you need a stiff shot of espresso at even the sight of organic granola, then *In the Moment* is bound to give you hives.

**albumreview**

Ben's Brother
Beta Male Fairytales
Relentless

GARY ALLEN
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Jamie Hartman is a man truly obsessed with his runner-up status in life. Ben's Brother takes its name from Jamie's experience being forever referred to with respect to his older brother, Ben, and the album title, *Beta Male Fairytales*, is a reference to Jamie's status as the "beta male" in his family. There's very little mention of the rest of the band on either the liner notes or the website, so one can assume they're more of a backing band than

an integral part of the picture—Ben's Brother's Supremes, if you will.

A more apt title for the band might be "Blunt's Brother": while the listener doesn't know Ben from any old Adam, you can almost hear someone at the record label exclaiming "this sounds like James Blunt; let's sign them!" Actually, Ben's Brother is more like a missing evolutionary link between Toploader and James Blunt, which by my math would date them

somewhere around the summer of 2002.

Despite all that, *Beta Male Fairy Tales* is quite good; it's lyrically quirky, and has strong melodies that break down your immediate desire to dislike the album. Surprisingly, even songs with titles like "God With Another Name" and "Find Me An Angel" aren't as annoying as you'd expect. Stand-outs are the lush "Beauty Queen," the deliciously depressing "Let Me Out," and the perfectly understated "I Am Who I Am."

Despite a somewhat dated sound and a cover that looks slightly more 'N Sync-esque than is desirable, *Beta Male Fairytales* is a solid album that is very listenable, if not all that exciting. Beta male or not, any album with a harmonica interlude can't be all bad.

**albumreview**

Chikinki
Brace, Brace
Weekender Records

BRYAN SAUNDERS
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Listeners *should* brace themselves because Chikinki's newest record, *Brace, Brace*, is all that and (as one of their new tracks is called) "Something More."

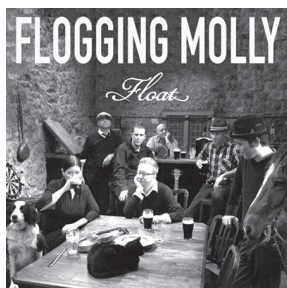
Three years after the groundbreaking success of *Lick Your Ticket*, the British boys of Chikinki have finally released a new album. But the band clearly spent the time perfecting their distinct sound:

Brace, Brace has the same delightfully dark and edgy beats that made *Lick Your Ticket* such an epic album. And like its predecessor, *Brace, Brace* has an abundance of bone-crackling and technically complex riffs, especially within the songs "Oh My God," "Rain," and "Lies All Over My Eyes."

However, the members of Chikinki don't merely rehash their past successes in this newest release.

Tracks such as "Sunrise" and "You Said" take a departure from the usual dark emotion and animal passion of *Lick*, and instead explore a cheerier, civilized side of Chikinki that will leave one with no choice but to dance. Some might even dare say that "You Make it Look Easy," "Talk to the Moon," and "A Little Time" explore the group's previously hidden romantic side.

Most impressive, though, are "Let it Go" and the aptly titled "2 Possible Worlds (Collide)." With these tracks, members of Chikinki masterfully compound their dangerously sharp sound with their newfound optimism and sophistication. Every song of *Brace, Brace* is a fresh gem in Chikinki's crown, but these select few are the ones that will surely become fan favourites.

**albumreview**

Flogging Molly
Float
SideOne Dummy Records

VANESSA HORNE
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Pour yourself a pint and settle down at your favourite Irish pub, and you'll be ready for the fast paced, Celtic punk that Flogging Molly delivers. Their fourth studio album, *Float*, is again jam-packed with songs you can sing and jig to into the wee hours of a Saturday night.

Combining everything from an accordion to an electric guitar, the band delivers a variety of sounds that help carry singer Dave King's Irish voice. In addition to using a variety of instruments, everything is played

very, very fast, living up to their punk inspirations.

"Requiem For A Dying Song" is political anthem like "Drunken Lullabies" that, while pessimistic, is still upbeat. Several other tracks, particularly "Float" and "Punch Drunk Grinning Soul," employ an incredibly catchy violin hook and consistently maintain their frantic pace, except for a brief moment on "Lightning Storm" where a guitar solo is unleashed.

Furthermore, tracks like "Us of Lesser Gods" and "The Story

So Far" convey the band's passion about their identity, heritage, and the good ol' days. Dave King illustrates his personal acquaintance with relationships and disappointment where he sings, "Between a man and a woman / It's everything or nothing at all."

Flogging Molly have created a fun and often political album that makes you want to see the band's intensity live, free from the confines of a recording studio. Though they do take some time to slow down for "The Story So Far" and "Float," these tracks hardly break up the album's furious pace.

Those who were fans of previous work of Flogging Molly will get the same fast, driving, tracks with political and misfortune-themed lyrics.

Float is a consistent album from Flogging Molly, and although no risks were taken by the band, it won't disappoint long-term fans.

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