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Winfred Cross Sounds

Maysa's clever classic covers

Maysa Classic Soul Various producers Shanachie Records



Doing a cover CD is becoming so passé. Seems like it's harder to find good new material these days.

Michael McDonald, Vanessa Williams and a few others have done well with cover CDs. Maysa can be added to that list. Once the lead singer for Incognito, Maysa has been eluding out a decent solo career. This should put her over the top.

Maysa's smokey alto fits these songs like marriage fits Will and Jada. She doesn't try anything out of the way or over the top - she simply sings the heck out of each song.

Each song is done in the jazzy style that made the group Incognito nearly irresistible.

Despite the performances, some of the songs have gotten way too much mileage lately. "Wishing On A Star," "Betha By Golly Wow" and "The First Time (Ever I Saw Your Face)" are popular remakes. But Maysa's tone - especially on "First Time" is so clear it doesn't matter.

Maysa's a bit more adventurous on the rest of the material. She handles Barry White's "Playing Your Game, Baby" like a champ. It's smooth and sexy, just the way White would have liked. She's nearly as sexy on "Don't Say Goodnight," made famous by the Isley Brothers.

Actually, few of the songs were originally done by women, which makes this CD

Please see MAYSA/2D



PHOTO/WADE NASH

Darren Vincent, owner of Real Eyes Bookstore, started EclecFest in December. The event draws thousands.

Mixing in NoDa

EclecFest brings together diverse arts and commerce

By Cheri F. Hodges cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

EclecFest is what it says: an eclectic mix of art, music, food and shopping.

The monthly event started in December at Real Eyes Bookstore in NoDa and has grown into an event that brings crowds to the arts district that might not normally go, says founder and Real Eyes owner Darren Vincent.

"Every month we do a

new theme and its every second Saturday. It's a chance for all the artists to come out and show their talents," he said. "I came up with EclecFest because we were doing forums in here and a lot of the artists were talking about leaving this district."

The reason was simple: gallery overhead is expensive for some of the newer artists. Vincent, as a business owner, can under-

stand the galleries' need to make money and as an art lover, he understands how the artists need a showcase.

"I think the artists make this district," he said. "With that and the fact that we don't have too much walking traffic around here during the day, I wanted to create some kind of festival outside."

Vincent said about 50 artists participate in

EclecFest and 82 percent of vendors sell some kind of art.

"They have African sculptures, paintings and African jewelry," he said.

The first festival, which was held in the cold drew over 1,000 visitors to NoDa, did more than support artists. Patrons discovered the eclectic shops in the area, benefiting mostly everyone, Vincent

See ECLECFEST/2D

ART REVIEW

Exhibit focuses on children's lives

By Sandy Seawright THE CHARLOTTE POST

Secret Games: Wendy Ewald Collaborative Works With Children, 1969-1999 Mint Museum of Art 2730 Randolph Rd.

When Wendy Ewald decided to become an artist, she made the decision to make photographs that were more immediate and revealing than traditional portraits.

As Ewald began working with children and had the children take photographs she says she found her lone

ideas less interesting and other perceptions began to surface.

This exhibit consists of 14 Ewald projects conducted all over the globe from Johannesburg, South Africa, in the Netherlands and in the Carolinas.

This is not an exhibit to view casually and it isn't intended to make you smile.

In the South Africa project which was created in 1992, two years before the election of Nelson Mandela, everyone stands together in tight, protected groups.

Many of Ewald's projects focus on children from

deprived circumstances.

In "Johnny's Story" the poverty ridden house of this white boy is falling apart and perhaps about to fall off the side of the hill. It would be interesting to see Ewald work with children from affluence. The photos are so honest and revealing obviously Ewald establishes great trust with the children.

In "The Alphabet Project" children photographed different objects to represent letters of the alphabet. A photograph of a boot (the word bota written on the photograph) represents the letter "B."

One of the most visually suc-

cessful projects here is "Black Self/White Self"

Set in Durham following the merging of the predominantly black city schools and the white county schools.

Ewald asked the black and white students to do a photograph of themselves as "black" and as "white." She let them draw directly onto their negatives.

Student Xavier Veron put a crystal bowl on his head to represent his 'white' self.

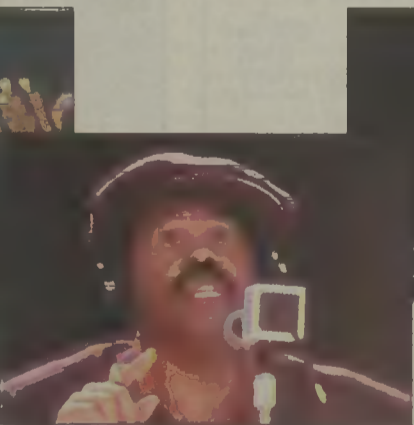
To be white, Michael Green outlined his body in white paint. Another student covered his photo negative from

Please see EWALD/2D

CIAA entertainment



Patti LaBelle added class and elegance to the CIAA tournament while hosting "Showtime at the Apollo."



Steve Harvey brought the jokes and his morning show to Charlotte, replacing Tom Joyner's popular show.



Fantasia, the latest star to call Charlotte home, wowed the crowd at the Convention Center by singing her hits live.

PHOTOS/WADE NASH

All-star remakes pay homage to Sly Stone

Winfred Cross Sounds

Sly & The Family Stone Different Folks By Different Folks Sylvester Stewart, producer Legacy/Epic



If you missed Sly Stone's return from only God knows where on the recent Grammy awards telecast, you only missed a commercial for this recording.

It seems those unlikely pairings doing Stone's music were carefully calculated. Sony dug up some old Stone stuff and added some of today's "it" people.

That usually spells mess, but it turns out the calculations were pretty much cor-

rect. The integrity of Stone's songs wasn't harmed and most remained recognizable. Thankfully, Sly & the Family Stone's vocals appear on all tracks.

Actually, some of the new folks are very good. Joss Stone, John Legend and Van Hunt put a hurtin' on "Family Affair." Maroon 5 handles "Everyday People" as if it were raised on funk. You'd expect no less than brilliance from The Nappy Roots and

that's what you get when combined with Martin Luther on "Don't Call Me Nigger, Whitey." The title may sound corny, but the song is still relevant despite the fact nigger is so overused these days.

Stone is credited as producer, but many hands went into the remixes, including Will I. Am, Nile Rodgers, Steve Jordan and the Roots. All are to be commended for the great effort.



Turn on with electric teachers

Best Of The Electric Company Bill Cosby, Rita Moreno, Morgan Freeman, June Angela and Spider-Man Henry Behar, Bob Schwartz, directors Shout! Factory



As a child of the 1960s and '70s, I couldn't have escaped the Children's Television Workshop. It produced "Sesame Street," which I rarely missed.

But there was a funkier show called "The Electric Company" which taught phonics, pronunciation and to a lesser degree spelling. I know that now, but then I just thought it was a cool comedy show.

Part of that show is now available on DVD. "The Best Of The Electric Company" is a four-disc set that spans its debut in 1971 to 1975. The show aired until 1985. It's one of the funniest collections of clean sketch comedy you'll get. How cool pronunciation be funny? It's all in the witty writing and the great performers. Oscar, Grammy, Golden Globe and Emmy award winner Rita Moreno - the little woman with the great big voice - was a vital part of the cast and is featured throughout this disc. Remember the "Hey, you guys" scream at the beginning of the show? That's Moreno. Emmy winner Bill Cosby was also featured. Yes, it was before "Captain Kangaroo" and "The Cosby Show," but watching a younger Cosby lets you see greatness coming.

And there's Morgan Freeman - Mister Easy Reader himself. Freeman was way cool before movies and the Oscar thing. His segment of the program was my favorite. I actually learned from Freeman. He was pimp slick and cool without the seedy elements.

The four discs contain full shows as well as special features, which include a feature with Moreno, the founder of CTW and June Angela, a part of the cast from beginning to end.

"The Electric Company" will bring back memories and even teach your kids and grandkids a thing or two.

Ratings

Table with 2 columns: Rating (Classic, Excellent, Good, Fair, Why?, No stars - A mess) and Star count (5 stars, 4 stars, 3 stars, 2 stars, 1 star)

