

Spring's album releases music to your ears

FROM PRESS RELEASES

The past few months have seen the release of many new albums from bands and artists both familiar and unfamiliar.

Here is a sampling of a few of those new releases:

Collective Soul, *Blender*

Collective Soul has been around for most of the 1990s. The group has had eight number one hits throughout the course of its career.

Their newest, *Blender*, has 11 songs, including "Why Pt. 2," the first released single and "Perfect Day," a duet between Collective Soul lead singer Ed Roland and rock 'n' roll legend Elton John.

A *Rolling Stone* magazine review said that the album is "front-loaded with penetrating, powerhouse riff rockers. *Blender* simply shreds with unapologetic classic-rock energy."

The band consists of Roland as lead singer, keyboards and guitars; Ross Childress on lead and rhythm guitars; Dean Roland on rhythm guitars; Will Turpin on bass and percussion; and Shane Evans on drums and percussion.

Other songs on the album include "Happiness," "Boast," "10 Years Later," "Skin" and "After All."

Sinomatic, *Sinomatic*

This debut album by a group from Youngstown, Oh., contains tracks such as the first single "Bloom" and "What Love Is."

Other tracks on the album include "Girlfriend," "Leave Me Tomorrow," "My Time" and "One Life."

Ken Cooper, lead singer for Sinomatic, noted that the song "Bloom" is not a song about love, as some people might think, but about cocaine, which was a major part of his life for several years.

The band's other members include Rick Deak on lead and rhythm guitars, Bryan Patrick on lead and rhythm guitars, Dave Markasky on bass and Matt Lawrence on drums and percussion.

The band was influenced by rock bands such as Guns N' Roses and Metallica.

Geddy Lee, *My Favorite Headache*

Geddy Lee has been the lead vocalist and bass player of Rush for many years. Lee left Rush, which produced 22 albums with worldwide sales of over 35 million, to strike out on his own. *My Favorite Headache* is his debut album.

He is joined by guitarist Ben Mink and drummers Matt Cameron (Pearl Jam, Soundgarden) and Jeremy Taggart (Our Lady Peace) to produce songs such as "My Favorite Headache," "Grace to Grace," "The Angels' Share" and "Slipping."

Some of the songs sound like those of Rush, Lee admitted. So if some of the songs sound like a flashback to the 1982 Rush album *Signals*, there's good reason.

But Rush hasn't completely disbanded. Earlier this year, the trio, comprised of Lee, Alex Lifeson and Neil Peart, had planned to reunite to create Rush's twenty-third album.

Poe, *Haunted*

Poe's second album on Atlantic records is, according to the artist herself, "a journey towards intimacy."

The album itself is dual-purposed toward that intimacy: first, it is getting to know her late father, documentary filmmaker Tad Danielewski, by sampling his voice from old cassette recordings and structuring what she calls a "conversation" with him. Second, the album's intimacy is directed at gaining a better understanding of self.

The album also contains thematic links to her brother's recently published novel, *House of Leaves*, by Mark Danielewski. The book, along with Poe's album, tends to ask the question, "What am I afraid of?"

On the album, Poe explores her relationship with her father as well as her relationship with herself.

Songs on the album include "Exploration B," "Walk the Walk," "Spanish Doll," "Hey Pretty," "Dear Johnny," "House of Leaves" and "If You Were Here."

The songs on the album are

woven together with narrative segues Poe created with samples of her father's voice.

Poe noted that her album's message is "confront your fears."

Hootie & the Blowfish, *Scattered, Smothered and Covered*

This is the Columbia, S.C., band's fourth release on the

Atlantic label. This album is a collection of live and studio cover versions. Mark Bryan on guitars, Dean Felber on bass, Darius Rucker on vocals and Jim Sonefeld on percussion chose 10 of the songs on the album and allowed fans to choose five more selections.

"Fine Line," "Renaissance Eyes," "Before the Heartache Rolls In," "Araby," "Driver 8,"

"I'm Over You," "Dream Baby," "I Hope That I Don't Fall In Love With You," "Gravity of the Situation" and "Use Me" were the band's choices.

Fans chose "Let Me Be Your Man," "Please, Please, Please Let Me Get What I Want," "I Go Blind," "Almost Home" and "Hey Hey What Can I Do" to round out the album.

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