

Marty Casey LP guilty of excesses

BY MORGAN ELLIS
STAFF WRITER

Marty Casey is the Clay Aiken of CBS's "Rock Star: INXS."

After coming in a close second, Casey and his longtime band, Lovehammers, are still clinging to the reality-show 15 minutes of fame with a self-titled major-label debut, which is wrought with shortcomings.

First of all, Lovehammers? Are they kidding? Terrible band name.

And then there's the other thing to discuss about Casey: his music. It ain't pretty.

Mostly all of the tracks sound as if they were written from the same formula: Cook up fast and unchanging drum beats and load them down with lots and lots of power chords.

The monotony makes the tracks hard to differentiate.

Unless you're sitting down and watching the track numbers change, you might never know that "Call of Distress" has gone into "Straight as an Arrow."

On "Rock Star: INXS," Casey was best known for his song "Trees," the first single from this album. Former Jane's Addiction guitarist Dave Navarro said it would be a hit.

Navarro is a good guitarist, but can you really take seriously any-

MUSICREVIEW

**MARTY CASEY AND LOVEHAMMERS
MARTY CASEY AND LOVEHAMMERS**

★★

one who does an MTV newlywed show?

"Trees" is one of the better tracks from the album, which has about as much depth as a kiddie pool.

Casey's recycled voice sounds fit for a Nickelback tribute band, and his self-titled LP does little more than emulate such terrible predecessors.

After listening to *Marty Casey and Lovehammers*, one has to wonder what INXS would have sounded like with this guy. Probably scary. There's no way Casey could have filled the shoes of the late INXS frontman Michael Hutchence.

Rock isn't getting anything new with this release. Marty Casey and Lovehammers just blend in with the rest of the bands being spun right now.

If you do pick up this album though, there's good news: You only have to listen to it for 38 minutes.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Nudie flick falls victim of own melodrama

BY ALEXANDRIA SHEALY
STAFF WRITER

Judi Dench's feisty, energetic portrayal of the widowed Mrs. Henderson in Stephen Frears' "Mrs. Henderson Presents," is almost good enough to clear the film of its narrative flaws.

But despite the efforts of Frears' all-star cast (including Bob Hoskins, Christopher Guest and the Grand Dame herself), "Mrs. Henderson Presents" fails to provide enough comedic moments to water down the film's unnecessary melodrama.

Set in pre-World War II London, the film loosely follows the true story of Laura Henderson, a wealthy Briton who — after the death of her husband leaves her unsure of how to manage her time and wealth — opens a theatre showcasing a nude musical review.

In Frears' version of the story, Henderson hires the experienced Vivian van Damm (Hoskins)

as managing producer of her new Windmill Theatre. When the theatre opens its first show, "Revuedevice," a nonstop song and dance performance, it is so successful that before long, other London theatres are copying the Windmill's idea.

Within only a week, the Windmill is heading toward a tragic end.

To save her theatre, Henderson suggests that some of the female performers appear nude. She uses her socialite charm to convince the snooty local censor, Lord Cromer (Guest), to allow the show to be performed, agreeing to his one condition — that the nude performers will remain completely still, like works of art in a museum.

It's disappointing to see such talented actors fall victim to an uneven script.

The second half of the film is weighted down by sloppy dramatics, suggesting that Frears and

screenwriter Martin Sherman had difficulty deciding on a consistent tone to the film.

Audiences are constantly ripped from high-energy vaudeville numbers, which are cleverly staged and genuinely entertaining, to an overly sentimental Henderson attempting to set up one of her performers with a front-bound soldier or overdone computer-generated long shots of the war-torn city.

While Dench's character provides amusing diva-esque antics, struggling attempts to make a social statement in the film's final moments throw "Mrs. Henderson" on a soapbox.

It's not a terrible movie; it's honestly hardly even bad. Dench and

MOVIEREVIEW

'MRS. HENDERSON PRESENTS'

★★★

Hoskins retain such an effortless chemistry throughout the ups and downs of the film's disappointing script that it's impossible not to applaud them.

But despite the nonstop nudity and colorful parade of charming vaudeville numbers, "Mrs. Henderson Presents" fails to be memorable at all, falling into a veritable windmill of melodrama and period-piece clichés.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

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