EMILIANA TORRINI ME AND ARMINI

It all escalates quickly and unex-pectedly on *Me and Armini*.

The piercing croon of the Icelandic singer Emiliana Torrini is first used in three beautiful and impeccably constructed folk and pop songs that begin the story of the other woman to a married man.

But the album soon becomes something far more interesting as Torrini's persona becomes more and more obsessive

"Heard It All Before" employs a sensual reggae beat before her band lets loose in full distorted rage as she holds no punches in describing the unslakable lust between her and

The arrangements are all amaz-ing. "Jungle Drums" blends slap-back and African rhythms into an irresistibly erotic come on, and "Dead Duck" seamlessly melds electric buzzes and clicks to a sim-ple piano ballad before exploding into raging noise.

But it is when things come to a gut-wrenching head on the album's

best song "Gun," that its devastat-ing power is fully realized.

Over a slow, bluesy guitar line punctuated by snaps and distant female pants, Armini finds his wife in bed with another man.

Shooting the man, he turns the gun on himself. Full of possessive rage, Torrini sings, "Look into the barrel and say that you love me/ barret and say that you love me/ yes, this is a kiss that I swear will blow your mind."

The most amazing aspect Me and Armini is that Torrini pres-

meating emotion that it forces you identify with her the whole time.

A trait that draws the listener into the fabric of the narrative and makes him think the unsettling question - "Could this happen to

-Jordan Lawrence

BRIAN WILSON THAT LUCKY OLD SUN

To be honest, Brian Wilson would deserve a medal if his latest outing just managed not to suck.

Finishing the lost Beach Boys album SMiLE in 2005, Wilson sounded tired and vapid, missing the charm of his old band.

But with *That Lucky Old Sun*, Wilson has recaptured the magic of his incredible '60s run and created a work bursting with nostalgic fun.

Wisely avoiding the ornate harmonies of the Beach Boys, Wilson lets his knack for blissfully grandiose pop melody take over, giving album a propulsive glee that he hasn't shown in years.
A cohesive tribute to Los Angeles

held together tightly by clever nar-ratives written by *SMiLE* contrib-utor Van Dyke Parks, Wilson has created an album that comes close to the classics in his canon.

Only two songs here are duds. "Mexican Girl" is too campy even for Wilson, and self-mythologizing album closer "Southern California" is a painfully pretentious apology for ending the Beach Boys' run too

But it is that early end that Wilson is out to make up for. "I cried a million tears/I wasted a lot

of years/Life was so dead," Wilson sings in "Oxygen To The Brain."

Apology excepted Brian. Here's hoping your new creative run doesn't end here.

-Jordan Lawrence

REX THE DOG THE REX THE DOG SHOW

Rex the Dog has been making waves in the electronic world since he dropped the stellar Frequency

EP on Kompakt in 2004.

He quickly set himself apart from the crowd and has been gaining recognition with his epic synth lines and electro vibes, working in

the tech-house idiom.

The Rex the Dog Show, his first full length release, compiles career highlights along with some new jams for a collection that makes for both a nice compendium as well as a satisfying foretaste of what's in

The most valuable aspect of the record is its convenient inclusion of his remixes and previous singles. The remix of the Knife's Heartbeats" is a triumphant piece of electro-pop that raises hands, vocals and synthesizers to the sky

in a fit of candy coated bliss.

While it would be great to see more original releases, it's not something one can expect from a singles-based artist, and most of these tracks are going to be new to most casual listeners anyway

For the previously initiated there probably isn't enough new material to warrant a purchase, particularly at the expense of an import.
But for those looking to get into

one of the most consistent and throughout.

original producers in today's scene Picker reaches to the upper it makes for a great introduction.

LOST IN THE TREES ALL ALONE IN AN EMPTY HOUSE

Combining ornately orchestral instrumentation with lyrics that immediately tug at the heartstrings, Lost In The Trees has managed to create a record that is complex in its arrangements, all while avoiding the danger of getting muddied with indulgence.

"I spent my whole life on you/ And a built you a gorgeous house/ All to put up with your bitched mouth/And I threw all my dreams right out," Ari Picker sings to start the record, setting the general tone of desperation that permeates

range of his voice on many occasions, always hitting the cathartic climax just in time to fall back to the subtle strings that make up the bulk of the album.

But, it is the flourishes of the band that make the record. Whether it is a swell of strings or a particularly emotional turn of phrase, the record lives on the times when the complex arrangements are interrupted by quick snippets of raw power.

But, that is not to say that there are not missteps.

After the incredible gravity of the first few tracks, the record begins to drag, held back by over-

long instrumental tracks.
This is a small qualm, though, a minor criticism taken in the context of an otherwise incredible

JASOIN ADAMO SUNFLOWER

It's hard to write lines worse than, "There's a smile on my face/I can't wait to see your face/It's been a long, long while/And that's too long."

And this is just this kind of line that pervades the below-average, played-out white-boy soul of

Taking all the heart out of Motown, all the heartbreak out of the blues and all the fun out of anyone unfortunate enough to listen to this record, Adamo has created a dull

and lifeless record. The only song that has a smid-gen of a pulse is the unplugged version of "Purple Sky," but the aforementioned horrible lyrics

ruin any chance of this being a bright spot.

-Jamie Williams

-Jordan Lawrence







