

★ BROWSING ARTICLES IN "REVIEWS"

Feb
23

Escher's Enigma

Reviews // No Comments



Escher's Enigma

<http://www.reverbnation.com/eschersenigma>

Escher's Enigma consists of Brian Miller and Russ Miller, who have a combined 40+ years of performing and recording rock and pop music in a wide variety of settings. Russ has been playing the bass and recording professionally since the 1970s, while his son Brian has been playing guitar and piano, as well as singing, professionally since 2005.

The extraordinary quality of "For a Moment" is due to the fact that both musicians have significant recording experience. This highly collaborative project saw both musicians participating in the creative process of eight original songs, as well as interpretations of two popular tunes by well-known artists. Brian handled the guitars, vocals, keyboards, and midi programming, while Russ played the bass guitar. Brian mixed and mastered the album, and the two covers are extraordinarily delivered.

The CD kicks off with one of the best tracks in *Should Have Known*, which is a great tune on so many levels, but starts a little like that's not going to be the case. This is clever and an approach to be found throughout the songs. Everything cooks here from the guitars, vocals and other instruments. But then on *When Your Heart* is gets even better, with electric over acoustic guitars done right. This is another bit they do throughout the album, the guitars effortlessly intertwine. And the chorus here is to die for, leaving the vocals an equal match for everything else. This is probably the most accessible among the accessible on offer, if only it were longer, as it ends too abruptly, falling just short of epic. The next track isn't for me, but that's not to say it isn't interesting, because it is definitely the most eclectic vocal performance on the disc. But *My Guitar* makes up for it in every way. And the humor continues as it goes, but then so does the infectious songwriting and guitar and vocal deliveries. The next track is the wonderful *Hide Behind The Text*, with some cool guitar picking and bass grooves. This is simply a lovable piece and has to be a contender for my favorite song of theirs. I'm not as won over by *Life Of Solitude* as it brings things way down low from such a high before it. This still doesn't mean the track isn't a good one, especially with some sweet acoustic picking which saves it for me. And they do justice with a surprisingly good acoustic version of *Sweet*

ABOUT ME

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Child-O-Mine. I really enjoy the singing on every last track here. I'm often reminded of R.E.M., as well as the "Bare Naked Ladies."

This is a fantastic recording with a rather nice cover image by Alan Miller. It helps to research this band because they're very productive individuals and it adds interest to their music. It's not getting any easier to find great pop songwriting these days, it's usually not of the 100% variety, but I have yet to hear anything by them which isn't exactly that, and they widely depart from release to release. It's great to hear a full album but the track could be longer. That is if any the only fault on "For A Moment."

- Cory Frye

<https://www.facebook.com/eschersenigma>

Score: 8/10

Feb
23
Bullyheart
Reviews // 0 Comments



Bullyheart

URL: <http://www.bullyheart.com/home.html>

Anyone who's remotely familiar with me knows almost first and foremost about my love of all things 80s. Better yet, there is nothing quite like a kickass rocker chick with a strong voice and badass vibe. The first track on Bullyheart's album "Antigravity" fulfills both of those loves of mine instantly. Bullyheart's singer, Holly Long, has a strong voice and showcases her vocal abilities almost immediately with the title song, sharing the album's name, "Antigravity." I immediately heard a Chrissie Hynde / Pat Benetar influence in her sound, both big shoes to fill, but Holly Long slipped her feet right into those shoes and walked wherever the hell she wanted to in them.

The second track on the album, "Thin Air" starts off at a slower pace, but does that awesome thing good power ballads do in that while it starts out slower it builds up to a much stronger tempo and proceeds to blow listeners' minds. Once again – mission achieved by Bullyheart.

As you continue further into "Antigravity" you're treated to a different sound and style in almost every song. Not many artists can successfully pull this off and tend to lean towards one or two styles they embrace and know they do well and stick with that particular mantra (Nickelback – I'm looking at you!) Bullyheart not only manages to show incredible range and diversity in style, they do it well. Do I really like country music? Not that there's anything wrong with that particular genre of music at all, it just isn't what I normally prefer, yet I still loved the fifth track on the album, "Lost My Nerve" which had that more country-style sound.

Being a writer, I can be a pretty harsh critic about lyrically strong tunes. If I were to list out my top 20 favorite songs of all time, a solid 18 of them would be on the list because of something lyrically more than anything else, whether a certain line is just so brilliantly written that it's forever etched in my brain, or the words bring back memories or feelings of days long gone. Do I necessarily agree with all the topics and statements Eminem makes in his songs? No. Is he a genius lyrically with the clever ways he forms his thoughts into words into music? Absolutely. I was thrilled with the lyrics on "Antigravity" – the tracks are written with not only cleverness and smarts, but they're powerful when needed, soulful when the song calls for it and deeply moving throughout.

There are just a couple tracks that I felt faltered slightly from the incredible vocals heard early (and again later) in the album. "Shaken" is a good example I felt could have been stronger vocally, but

with lyrics like, "You would be so angry if you could get up off your knees" it was easy to get over.

Overall, I completely enjoyed Bullyheart's "Antigravity" and give it a solid 8.5 stars out of 10. If Holly Long's vocals remained as I'd heard in the first several tracks of the album, this very well could have been my first 10 star rating.

- Michael Rand

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/HollyLongMusic>

Feb
17

Nick DeStefano – We Seek Higher Ground

Reviews // 0 Comments



Nick DeStefano – Wee Seek Higher Ground

<http://www.reverbNation.com/nickdestefano>

Nick DeStefano is a singer/songwriter from NJ who performs with his band The Spiders at local bars in North Jersey. He has performed all over North America. He has appeared on MTV with videos he shot with Faces In The Crowd & Y Fly 2 London. "We Seek Higher Ground" is his latest single released on Tunecore.

This song is a cry for help and a good one, as you feel the pain with every note as it starts off relatively slow but builds into a frenzy of acoustic guitars. The vocals are well tracked with a layered feel, as if at times a choir is singing. These two elements fight for room to express the overall message, which explains life after a flood, and the only place to go is to higher ground. This is all well done for a solo track by DeStefano himself. It has an overall group sound and that helps it all the more, as it is chock full of awesome guitar and vocals. You really get the feeling he has lived this, along with the community in question. It could use another minute or so to make it more epic, but otherwise this is a beautiful and very hard to fault track. A jubilant performance is delivered to contrast the subject matter. In short this is simply an excellent number that works in every way.

- Larry Toering

AMAZON: <http://www.amazon.com/We-Seek-Higher-Ground/dp/B00QZFPRUM>

Score: 9/10

Feb
17

Jourdan Myers

Reviews // 0 Comments



Jourdan Myers

URL: <http://jourdanmyers.com/>

Minneapolis singer/songwriter, Jourdan Myers, does not consider herself a perfectionist, but she does insist on doing things right the first time, which is why she collaborates with other industry professionals who share her work ethic. "My passion is to create excellent collaborative art that gives others a platform to share their expertise." Thus Myers, upon entering The Library Studio to record her second album, *Ruin Me With Love*, gave the musicians total freedom to shape each song according to their own artistic judgment. "Not only did it make for an incredibly fun studio experience," Myers says, "but we nailed it. They gave life to my songs in a way I never imagined. It was such a positive result that I wanted every professional involved to have creative license, artistic freedom and collaboration to do what they do best — right down to the tracking, the production, the photography, the design, and the performance." With producer Matt Patrick (*Library Recording Studio; Greycoats, John Mark Nelson*), Myers built a team of artists hailing from the bands of Prince, Andrew Bird, Owl City, and The Brighton.

This is not a high energy release by any means, but that might be the ticket to ride for it, starting out with a very pretty number on *Lifetime Or Before*, and staying the same course on *Long Days*. Both of these tracks provide the mood for most of the CD, but it picks up well in various other places, and you can tell it's well produced. I don't usually get into the type of thing found on the first two tracks but they never lost my attention either, so everything checks out concerning them. It's on the third track where things get more interesting though, and Jourdan starts to come out of her quiet shell. This begins with *Push Me On The Playground* and lets up on *The Fight*, which both contrast perfectly to show both sides the album. This is all going fine enough until *Wanderlust* sets them all apart somehow with a big improvement, even though nothing has gone wrong up to this point, it just comes out of left field and hits a home run. The rest of the songs aren't quite as strong but do contain some fabulous singing of which is definitely the featured element of course, Jourdan being a solo artist, backed here by arrangements that go from fluffy at times to very strong. I do like every song but there are clearly parts I enjoy better than others, but it doesn't matter on the whole because there are no points that actually bring it down. It's a very moving CD with tracks like *End Of Me* and *Dusty Roses* to prove it can hang with any singer/songwriter out there today without being completely restricted to the form.

This CD gets more points for consistency than anything else about it, but that is a compliment that is hard to get these days, just listen to *Firelight* and *Voice Of Silver* for evidence, let alone the rest on offer, and you'll want to hear it again.

SP Clarke

Purchase Link: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/JourdanMyers1>

Score" 7/10

Feb 17 **Max Random – Analog Man**
Reviews // 0 Comments



Max Random – Analog Man

URL: <http://www.420punk.com/>

I'm not going to say that Max Random is serious, but I'm also not going to say that he isn't either, on "Analog Man." This is an album that plays off two extremes, and both hits and misses its marks for stoner comedy backed by folk-ish songs, some of which pick up a little but most of which do not. He started out writing funny songs to play at college parties & was pushed to play an open mic, and that's really all I know about him.

The opening track *Godzilla* does raise a campy laugh and doesn't kill in the music department. I like the next couple of tracks, which are two of the best tracks on offer for me, but then on *Lesbian Folk Song* it gets overly weird for my taste with really quite a story going on. Some of the songs reflect a Frank Zappa influence but so modern you wouldn't think to compare it to that because it's comedy that weighs in a lot more than music here, but not all of it works while not all of the music doesn't work either. There is a balance somewhere for the listener of music and comedy lovers of this genre.

On *Monster Hash* the stoner and monster threads come together and there are two parts to this. You really try to feel for what Random is trying to do in the places where it falls short, and then something picks it back up and you're back to either enjoying something funny or a musical piece. *Ganja Babe* is another one of these tracks worth noting.

There are parts where the crowd does interfere a bit but it doesn't take that much away from the overall sound, it's just that it isn't even that way in some parts. It's hard to take it all too seriously concerning the lyrics but sometimes it's of question. But I do like tracks like *Big Dog* and *its Not Goodbye Forever*, the latter with a clear nod to Bob Dylan.

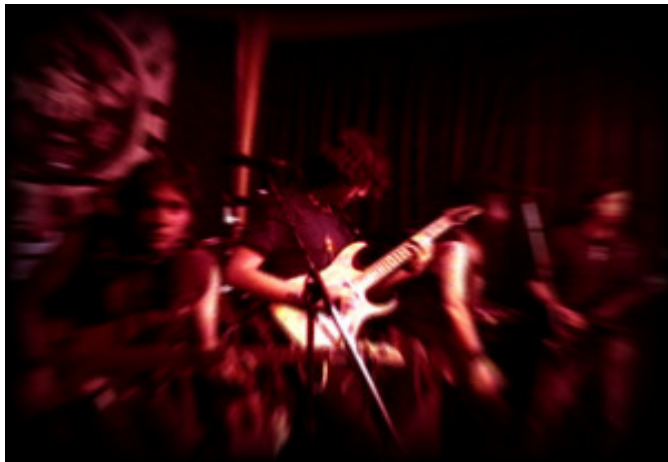
I like the comedy here more than the music, but the atmosphere is enthusiastic and there is no denying Max Random is hilarious, but musically he can use developing and probably will. It may even rate outstanding in its field

- Scott Prinzing

CD BABY: <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/maxrandomandthe420punk5>

Score: 7/10

Feb
12
Zolnegro
Reviews // 0 Comments



Zolnegro

REVERBANTION: <http://zolnegro.reverbnation.com/#about>

Progressive music is one of those genres that have gained so much popularity these days thanks to artists like the music genius Steven Wilson and bands as Periphery. Stick to their roots, ZOLNEGRO is a Latin band is a wild and quite creative act. Comprised of Ti Zok (Composer), Manuel Gonzales (Electric Guitar), Huichiloboz (Drums), Lalock (Percussion), **Tezcatlipoca Ipalnemohuani** (Bass), Mizzael (Electric Guitar) and Mario Salinas Villa (Electric Guitar), their music is literally as huge and wild as their lineup and some of their member's names.

"Tiembla" is frenzy, fast-paced song made up of so many noises that make up a loud melody. "Guerrerozol" on the other hand is build up of a complex structure of progressive rock and Latin fusion reminiscent of acts like The Mars Volta. Really love the guitar arrangements in "Kemekiero", there are too many in it and none of them get overshadowed by the percussion and other instruments.

There's really not bad comment for this band, I really admire the decision of gathering so many musicians and putting a band together. There's definitely a great audience for this band—at least The Mars Volta is considered by many a revolutionary and awesome band- and that is always a good. Also it's quite shocking and sad how most of rock bands in Latin America forget their roots, losing their essence and what makes them unique. These guys didn't, and you can hear that

throughout their songs.

Overall, their music is great. Maybe work on the quality, make it equally good as some tracks is more noise than music. I highly recommend this looking for something different, those who like to listen a song and lose control with it – you will not need any type of drugs or alcohol to lose your mind after you listen any of these band's songs. Trust me.

- RJ Frometa

Feb
12

The Skiffle Lounge

Reviews // 0 Comments



The Skiffle Lounge

<http://www.reverbnation.com/skifflelounge>

Having started in the scene when Harry Wilson, Larry Hinkle and John Buck began to jam acoustically at Larry's woodshop with other friends like Moe, Lars and Piper. The jams were recorded and a unique music started to develop. In some way, all three musicians left their old musical background (For example, Larry used to be in a Hardcore Punk Band) and create something new.

Blending Americana, Skiffle and Jazz together, the result is such a fun and unique type of music like "Salt City" which once you listen you have to agree how perfect it would be in a Wes Anderson movie. The guitar, vocals and what sounds like a bass, I guess, it's something even those who aren't into these three genres would love. "Spirals In The Sky" follows the same rhythms as the other track, though this has a more old Rock sound reminiscent of iconic band The Beatles, even the vocals are more aggressive and music itself.

I seriously don't see who wouldn't be into this band, perhaps someone who hates Wes Anderson or has something against Americana music. It's minimalism and simplicity is what makes TheSkiffleLoungeSound such a creative and great band. There's no need of complex, loud music and riffs and like I have previously mentioned in few of my reviews, create something so awesome with just three instruments ain't easy to accomplish.

Overall, I can definitely see the guys going places, after all, if the likes of Imagine Dragons and The Lumineers can, why they can't? I know there's an audience looking to hear more of this so called Americana genre, I know I am and really excited and happy to have found this band. Definitely looking forward to what they have for us in the future. In the meantime, look for them and enjoy!

- RJ Frometa

Feb
11

32 Below – Every Little Thing About You

Reviews // 0 Comments



32 Below – Every Little Thing About You

URL:<http://32below.net/>

32 Below is a collection of determined country boys from Fargo, North Dakota. 32 Below has produced and released five albums to date and have sold more than 25,000 copies. The guys have taken the stage with acts such as Keith Urban, Justin Moore, The Band Perry, and Little Big Town, just to name a few. Their new album *Every Little Thing About You* was released in November of 2014 and it is full of everything country/rock listeners have come to love — strong guitar solos, catchy beats, and elaborate harmonies. Long-time fans and new listeners will detect a fresh and spunky sound and a distinct and new feel that comes courtesy of catchy, sing-along choruses and undertones ranging from pop to good old country. 32 Below reminds me a bit of The Swon Brothers, but don't be fooled, they have their own sound.

32 Below is overall an amazing group of guys. They're fun, energetic and all-around talented. I took an extra liking to a few of the songs off of their album *Every Little Thing About You* and this is why:

"You, Me, and the Whiskey," is a song that you would put on at a house party to get everyone fired up. It's an all around feel-good song, because let's face it, who doesn't love whiskey and having a good time? The instrumentals alone makes you want get up and dance, paired with the strong vocals and exciting lyrics, you can't help but smile when you hear this song.

"Songs On the Radio," is a pun inside itself. It should be on the radio! I would love to be driving on a warm summer day blasting this through my speakers. It feels like an adventure, or like a road trip anthem. It's an overall feel-good tune, just like *You, Me and the Whiskey*.

"Someone New," is a song about a break-up, and moving on with life afterwards. What's a country band without music about a bad break-up? You can really feel the emotion behind this song by the way they emphasize the experience. It makes me feel like I went through a break-up, moved on a grew up in the four minutes that it plays.

If you enjoyed listening to *Every Little Thing About You* by 32 Below, I suggest you take a look at some similar artists and tracks listed below;

Clay Walker – "This Woman and This Man"

The Swon Brothers – "Later On"

Chris Young – "Nothin' But The Cooler Left"

Montgomery Gentry – "I'll Keep The Kids"

Overall, I think 32 Below is an extremely underrated group. They have everything it takes to make it big, so, why haven't they? They work hard, produce great music and are all-around genuine people. I really hope to see this group of North Dakota boys blow up in the country music scene. If they keep doing what they are doing, I definitely believe they will see results. I give it a year or two before these country boys find themselves in a crowd of thousands of adoring fans.

- Michelle Lopez

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/32-Below/113686705516>

11

Reviews // 0 Comments



Joe Ness – *Ellipsis*

<http://joeness.com/>

Joe Ness is a rapper from Brooklyn, New York, and he shows no fear in his most recent release *Ellipsis*. Ness is no newbie to the rap-game. His catchy hooks and brilliant lyrics have been gravitating toward the scene for over a decade. His slick bars and stomach rumbling metaphors are what he will use to get himself into the ears of true music lovers. Ness' hooks pull you in and have you addicted to every note. He is great at word play but you'll often have to listen a few times before you catch onto his clever metaphors and analogies. Ness has shared the stage with some of the best Hip-Hop acts to date, including; Biz Markie, Action Bronson and Pusha T. Ness has raw talent and always shows this by slaying every verse that he writes. Ness dropped "Off the Bench" in 2012 which gathered thousands of downloads within months, while his mixtape "Flight Class," even went silver. Ness recently remixed "Show Me," by Chris Brown and Kid Ink, and completely killed his freestyle. The hip-hop veteran continues to produce some of the most impressive music today. Even if he's talking about women and liquor like every other rapper, you can't help but listen. Ness just has a unique sound and incredible stamina.

"Ellipsis" is by far one of the most unique hip-hop records I've had the pleasure of listening to. I personally don't always listen to the genre but I took a liking to quite a few of Joe Ness' songs for these reasons:

"Swagg Drippin'" is what mainstream radio drools over. The title aside, Ness emphasizes his personality and shows that he is here to stay. The intro builds anticipation and leads it's listeners to believe something intense is about to happen, and that's exactly what it does. It pumps you up and gives listeners a feeling of intensity and power.

"Cinderella" is a song I took a liking to, a little bit because of the title, but also because it's a catchy song. It's about Ness falling for a girl and he wants to be her prince. He wants to treat her like a princess, unlike other people in her past have treated her.

"The Pilot," is another radio-friendly track, Ness talks about sex, having money and being fly. And what's a rap song without those three principles? Exactly.

If you enjoyed listening to Joe Ness' *Ellipsis*, I suggest you take a look at some similar artists and tracks listed below;

Kid Ink – "Show Me"

Roy Jones Jr. – "Go Hard Or Go Home"

Mike Posner – "Top Of The World"

Chief Keef – "Round Da Rosey"

Ellipses shows Ness at his peak – unique, confident, and smart. Kicking things off with an intro that might as well have been produced by Jay-Z, it's THAT good; Ness catches you off guard, painting a beautiful musical picture that builds anticipation for what is to come in the rest of the album. I hope to see Joe Ness around to produce these incredible records for at least another decade – a bit insightful, and sometimes arrogant, but all around this was a solid album. Ness has a huge selection of songs no matter what mood you are in.

YOU TUBE: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSCSBg_FkMk

- Michelle Lopez

Feb
8

Jason Masi – *Power of a Woman*

Reviews // 0 Comments



Jason Masi – Power of a Woman

URL: <http://www.jasonmasi.com/>

Score: 4/5 Stars

Jason Masi is an American/DC based singer-songwriter. He got his start with Richmond, VA based group, Jubeus, opening for acts like Blind Melon, Everclear, and SOJA and releasing two well received albums, "Two Tone Circles" 2004 and "Natural Mood" 2007, respectively. He stepped out as a solo artist in 2010, trading in the band's roots-jam driven rock for a more acoustic soul/r&b songwriter approach. He has since released three solo albums, "Balance & Pull", 2010, "Life Is Wonderful", 2012 and "Power of a Woman", 2014. His transition has led him to supporting slots for hit songwriters like Bleu and Darryl Worley, and has kept him busy on the road performing over 250 shows per year.

On Masi's newest record, "Power Of A Woman", released on October 2014 has an approach that revisits much of the soulful pop sensibility of prior releases, but brings a fresh clarity and edginess to his next collection of heartfelt tunes. The tone and style of the album explores various genres, but maintains the honesty and focus that defines Masi's sound.

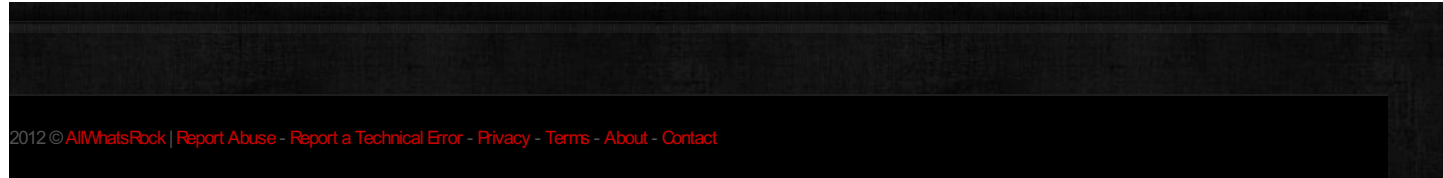
The CD instantly reflects a soulful pop mastery that won't quit, opening with the most radio friendly number *How To Be Rich*, which is something of course most people would like to know. This is a winning draw from the title alone, and it stays the course throughout most of the disc, with the title track doing the business it should. *Power Of A Woman* is a 100% on the money song, fit for radio, television, movies, even malls and stores could use it on their intercoms, it's that good. The album is full of songs this good, but not all of them stand out as well, especially the orchestra heavy stuff. Some other highlights to be found are in the shape of the bluesy *I Will Make It Up To You*, which is one of the best tracks as well, and *Woman Will You Be My Fire*, which is a brilliant title but there are a few lesser to be desired tracks in the mix, but they're of the take your pick variety concerning them. Masi even goes into r&b territory on more than one song, and there is incorporation of some classical factors to round it out nicely. There should be more guitar parts to chew on, but it's made up for and then some by the overall strength of the arrangements.

These songs are all compelling one way or another, and Masi shows his most musical maturity to date, which should do well in taking him the distance by now. In a world full of clones he brings together styles that work better than most, Masi keeps up with the best of 'em.

- Scott Prinzing

I-TUNES: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/power-of-a-woman/id920082197>

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