

BY JEFFREY SISK

'The Guilty Pleasure Tour'

Meat Loaf (Concert One)

★★★★

Though he's never been able to recapture the magic of 1977 debut album "Bat Out of Hell," Meat Loaf remains, even at age 65, one of the most committed and energetic live performers around. "The Guilty Pleasure Tour" DVD captures Meat Loaf in all his glory on last year's sold-out visit to Australia and New Zealand.

The two-hour concert features blistering renditions of 13 tunes, including classics like "Bat Out of Hell," "You Took the Words Right Out of My Mouth," "Rock and Roll Dreams Come Through," "I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)," "Two Out of Three Ain't Bad" and "Paradise By the Dashboard Light." There's even a 40-minute documentary about Meat Loaf's time in Australia that includes a new interview with the artist. This is a must for his fans.

'Gifted'

The Jigsaw Seen (Vibro-Phonic)

★★★★½

British indie pop outfit the Jigsaw Seen scored with last year's winter-themed concept album "Winterland" and are back with "Gifted," a record with similar thematic elements but not a true sequel. Frontman Dennis Davison and his mates originally went back into the studio to record a couple bonus tracks for a "Winterland" deluxe reissue, but found themselves with an album's worth of material. Among the highlights here are "Open Up the Box Pandora," "Myth of the Season," the David Bowie cover "Sell Me a Coat" and "Rise of the Snowflake Children."

'Bring It on Home'

Shannon Whitworth & Barrett Smith (Self-released)

★★★★

Shannon Whitworth and Barrett Smith are talented artists in their own rights so it should come as no surprise that their collaboration is nothing short of magical. Such is the case on "Bring It on Home," a 12-track collection of cover tunes by their favorite songwriters. Sharing vocals, Whitworth and Smith put their stamp on songs by Sam Cooke ("Bring It on Home to Me"), Paul Simon ("Duncan"), Leonard Cohen ("Bird on the Wire"), Tom Waits & Kathleen Brennan ("Green Grass"), James Taylor ("You Can Close Your Eyes") and A.C. Jobim ("Corcovado"). Fantastic.

'Prince From Another Planet: 40th Anniversary Edition'

Elvis Presley (RCA Legacy)

★★★★½

It had been 15 years since Elvis Presley last performed live in New York City when he took to the Madison Square Garden stage June 9-11, 1972, for four sold-out shows. "Prince From Another Planet" chronicles that weekend with a two-CD/one-DVD set that's essential listening and viewing for those who love the King.

Disc 1 features the Saturday matinee in its entirety over the course of 25 tracks. From Presley hits like "That's All Right," "Polk Salad Annie," "Heartbreak Hotel," "Love Me Tender" and "Suspicious Minds" to stellar covers of Creedence Clearwater Revival ("Proud Mary"), Three Dog Night ("Never Been to Spain") and the Righteous Brothers ("You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'"), Presley was on top of his game. Disc 2 is the Saturday evening performance and is virtually identical to the afternoon set, minus "Until It's Time for You to Go," "Blue Suede Shoes," "Reconsider Baby" and "I'll Remember You." Presley also delivers a stellar rendition of "The Impossible Dream (The Quest)" in the evening show. The DVD includes video of the Saturday afternoon show (with hand-held 8-millimeter footage from a fan), plus footage from the Friday press conference.

'The Fire Plays'

Ari Hest (Project 4)

★★★★½

Having loved Big Apple singer/songwriter Ari Hest's 2007 album "The Break-In," I was a little underwhelmed by last year's "Sunset Over Hope Street." I'm happy to report that Hest is back in fine form on "The Fire Plays," an enjoyable gathering of 11 tunes that puts his rich baritone to good use. Keepers include "Untitled Part 2," "Winter of Yes," "Know Where," the title track and "Last So Long." If you like what you hear, Hest will be performing Nov. 27 at Club Cafe.

'Walking Down the Streets'

The Letter Yellow (Self-released)

★★★★

Brooklyn-based trio the Letter Yellow get their career off to a promising start with "Walking Down the Streets," a debut album that takes us on a musical journey through the streets of New York City. Equal parts melancholy and uplifting, the 12-track release gives every indication that the Letter Yellow are a band on the rise. The opening one-two punch of "Changed" and "Hold Me Steady" is fantastic, and the guys soar on "Hooray He's Not Dead," "I Got You," "Window," "14 Bar Blues" and "Southern Bound."

'Darker Than Light'

Bobby Bare (Plowboy)

★★★★

It's been seven years since we last were treated to a studio album from outlaw country icon Bobby Bare and "Darker Than Light" was worth the wait. Still sounding great at age 77, Bare struts through a 16-track collection of well-chosen cover tunes and a sprinkling of originals. Bare scores with Woody Guthrie's "Going Down the Road Feeling Bad (I Ain't Going to Be Treated This Way)," U2's "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For," Merle Travis' "Dark as a Dungeon" and Bob Dylan's "Farewell Angelina." Additional standouts include "Boll Weevil," "House of the Rising Sun," "I Was Drunk," "Banks of the Ohio" and "The Devil and Billy Markham." Bare's

Boys from the 'Burg

Chance meeting leads to big break for Code Orange Kids

BY BRIAN KRASMAN

'Love Is Love//Return to Dust'

Code Orange Kids (Deathwish)

★★★★

A chance meeting between Pittsburgh hardcore unit Code Orange Kids and Deathwish Inc. head/Converge frontman Jacob Bannon at a show in which they both appeared in Braddock led to these fresh-out-of-high-school upstarts to a deal with one of the most important labels in extreme music. Not too much pressure. Apparently it wasn't as their debut full-length "Love Is Love//Return to Dust" is a raucous, energetic burst of energy and passion that has the band positioned as one of the genre's biggest hopes for the future.

The 10 songs on this record blow by in about



27 minutes, which is a perfect length to keep their unbridled passion and rage flowing. At times the band sounds much like Converge, at others they exhale the same atmospheric air as Cave In, but never do they copy those influences. Cuts such as furious, riff-heavy opener "Flowermouth (The Leech)," sludgy "Sleep (I've Been Slipping)" and

"Roots Are Certain//Sky Is Empty" should get people raging on floors at their shows, while "Colors (Into Nothing)" shows their vulnerable, textured side. This not only is one of the most impressive records to come out the area this year, it's one of the best in all of hardcore.

Brian Krasman is a contributing writer for Trib Total Media

still got it.

'Poison Packets'

Saul Conrad (Mountain of Leopards)

★★★★½

Singer/songwriter Saul Conrad makes an impressive debut — and helps launch new label Mountain of Leopards in the process — with "Poison Packets." These intriguing tunes find Conrad showing off his guitar and piano work, as well as his Neil Young-ish vocals. Among the standouts are "Bonfire Blues," "Darkness," "Whiskey Eggs," "Pack Up Your Razors" and "The Engines." At just 20 minutes, "Poison Packets" is done too soon. Can't wait to hear more.

'Want to Give'

Crushed Out (Cool Clean Water)

★★★★

Blues-rock duo Crushed Out began life as Boom Chick in 2009, releasing the excellent "Show Pony" EP, and continue their stomping ways with a new moniker on debut full-length "Want to Give." With Frank Hoier (guitar) and Moselle Spiller (drums) working the boy-girl vocals to perfection, this 10-track release is a throwback delight. From the opening notes of the title track to the final strains of "Country Star," Crushed Out don't miss a trick. Among the many keepers are "Weigh You Down," "Shake Can Well," "Push Down & Twist" and "Firelight."

'Live With the Colorado Symphony'

DeVotchKa (Cicero)

★★★★

There's always been something orchestral about the gypsy folk of Denver collective DeVotchKa, so it makes sense that they'd eventually team up with a real orchestra. "Live With the Colorado Symphony" shows the Tom Hagerman-fronted outfit in their glory as they revisit some of their best tunes with the help of a 60-piece orchestra. The 16-track, 66-minute set is a must for their fans as DeVotchKa deliver remarkable renditions of "The Clockwise Witness," "Along the Way," "All the Sand in All the Sea," "Queen of the Surface Streets," "The Enemy Guns" and "How It Ends."

'Kindred Spirits: A Collection'

Carrie Newcomer (Rounder)

★★★★

With more than a dozen albums to her credit, Carrie Newcomer has carved out an impressive career. The fantastic "Kindred Spirits" culls from her vast back catalog for a career-spanning collection that will please her longtime fans and probably enlist some new ones. New tunes "The Speed of Soul" and "A Long Christmas Dinner" surround 17 of Newcomer's best compositions. Keepers include "I Believe," "Geodes," "The Gathering of Spirits" (with Alison Krauss), "Before and After" (with Mary Chapin Carpenter), "Angels Unaware" and "If Not Now."

'Ultimate Creedence Clearwater Revival'

Creedence Clearwater Revival (Fantasy)

★★★★

For a band whose studio career consisted of just seven albums, the legacy of Creedence Clearwater Revival has endured for more than 40 years. With their rootsy approach to rock, the John Fogerty-fronted outfit gave us a treasure trove of classics. The three-CD, 52-track "Ultimate" is the latest CCR compilation and certainly ranks among the best. In addition to hits ("Proud Mary," "Bad Moon Rising," "Fortunate Son," "Down on the Corner," "Run Through the Jungle," "Born on the Bayou," "I Heard it Through the Grapevine") and some deeper album cuts, there's a 12-track live disc that showcases this remarkable band in concert.

'Borders & Boundaries'

Less Than Jake (Fat Wreck Chords)

★★★★½

While I've never been a big fan of veteran

ska-punk outfit Less Than Jake, I usually can appreciate their music. I never understood why 2000's "Borders & Boundaries" was dismissed by critics (I've always liked the album myself) and hearing this reissue just reinforces my point. Yes, the album — the original 15 tracks plus three bonus cuts — sounds more polished than earlier records, but it's still a lot of fun. Songs like "Magnetic North," "Suburban Myth," "Hell Looks a Lot Like L.A.," "Gainesville Rock City" and "Faction" hold up more than a decade later.

'Stay Young'

Young Rival (Sonic Unyon)

★★★★

Indie rock trio Young Rival impressed with their self-titled 2010 debut album and continue in that vein on stellar sophomore effort "Stay Young." They've tweaked the classic garage rock sound just enough to keep things interesting throughout the 10-track record. Things get off to a fast start with "Black Popcorn" and "Nothing You Know Well." After Young Rival spin their wheels on "Let It Go," they find their groove with "I Don't Care," personal favorite "Black Is Good," "Better Things to Do" and "Valerie." Keep on eye on these guys.

'Bad Weather'

Betty Black (Frau Pink/KID)

★★★★½

A longtime collaborator with others, Sylvia Gordon takes the spotlight herself with the "Bad Weather" EP, her first solo effort under the Betty Black moniker. Gordon shows off her sultry voice throughout the seven-track release, with standout tracks that include "Am I Not Your Girl?," the Van Halen cover "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love," "Paper Dolls" and "Killing Time." The electronic pop field is crowded, but Gordon/Black seems to have what it takes to stand out from the pack.

'Penny Black'

Further Seems Forever (Rise)

★★★★½

Chris Carrabba has gone on to big things since fronting emo outfit Further Seems Forever's 2001 debut album. But with solo and Dashboard Confessional projects on hold, Carrabba reunited with his former bandmates for "Penny Black," FSF's fourth studio release. The guys pick up where they left off a decade ago on this 12-track release. Carrabba sounds terrific on standout tunes "Rescue Trained," "King's Canyon," "Staring Down the Sun" track and "Rusted Machines."

'Keep Calm, Carry the Monkey'

Skipping Girl Vinegar (Secret Fox)

★★★★

Australian indie rockers Skipping Girl Vinegar popped up on my radar over the summer with the release of their excellent "Chase the Sun" EP. They build on that success with U.S. full-length debut "Keep Calm, Carry the Monkey," a collection of a dozen tunes that show why the band is so popular in their homeland. The EP's two best songs ("Chase the Sun," "Here She Comes") are included here, and SGV also score with "Hand to Hold," "Central Station," "Castles Full of Storms," "One Long Week" and "Heart Does Ache."

'I Feel Lucky Tonight'

The Hippy Nuts (Sandpile)

★★★★

A duo that's anchored by Kathena Bryant's twangy vocals and Tim Champion's masterful guitar work, the Hippy Nuts straddle the line between blues-rock and Americana on dynamic new album "I Feel Lucky Tonight." A nine-track release inspired by the 2008 economic crisis, Bryant and Champion barrel their way through a remarkably consistent album. "Love Put the Hurt on Me" sets the tone, and the Nuts deliver the goods on "Pouring Out My Soul," "Work on Me Baby," "Back in the Sugar" and "Smile on the Shelf."

Jeffrey Sisk is a managing editor for Trib Total Media

Upcoming concerts

Justin Bieber: 7 p.m. Nov. 20, Consol Energy Center, Uptown. \$37.50-\$81. 800-745-3000

Supersuckers, The Cheats: 8 p.m. Nov. 20, Rex Theater, South Side, 412-381-6811

Tommy Castro & The Painkillers: 7:30 p.m. Nov. 20, Moon-dog's, Blawnox, 412-828-2040.

B.B. King: 7:30 p.m. Nov. 21, Benedum Center, Downtown. \$55-\$100. 412-456-6666

Kevin Smith: 8 p.m. Nov. 24, Carnegie Library Music Hall of Homestead, Munhall. \$45-\$100. 412-368-5225

Brian Setzer Orchestra "Christmas Extravaganza": 7:30 p.m. Nov. 25, Carnegie Library Music Hall of Homestead, Munhall. \$56-\$76. 412-368-5225

Jake Shimabukuro: 7:30 p.m. Nov. 27, Carnegie Library Music Hall of Homestead, Munhall. \$25-\$50. 412-368-5225

Carrie Underwood: 7:30 p.m. Nov. 27, Consol Energy Center, Uptown. \$41.50-\$60.50. 800-745-3000

Holiday Doo Wop Show with A Salute to The Marvelettes, Tribute to the Cornell Gunter Coasters, Larry Marshak's Tribute to the Platters: 2 and 8 p.m. Nov. 29, Palace Theater, Greensburg. \$28-\$48. 724-836-8000.

Twiztid, Hed PE, Lil Wyte, Potluck: 7 p.m. Nov. 30, Stage AE, North Shore. \$22.50-\$25. 800-745-3000

Clint Black: 8 p.m. Nov. 30, Palace Theatre, Greensburg. 724-836-8000

Lisa Lampanelli: 8 p.m. Dec. 1, Heinz Hall, Downtown. 412-456-6666

The Werks: 8 p.m. Dec. 1, Rex Theater, South Side, 412-381-6811

Other Lives, Indians: 9:30 p.m. Mon., Brillbox, Bloomfield. \$12. 866-468-3401

Kenny Loggins: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4, Carnegie Library Music Hall of Homestead, Munhall. \$42.50-\$65. 412-368-5225

Raul Malo: 7 p.m. Dec. 6, New Hazlett Theatre, North Side. \$27-\$30. 412-320-4610

Phil Vassar Christmas Show: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 6, Carnegie Library Music Hall of Homestead, Munhall. \$30-\$55. 412-368-5225

2 Chainz, Cap 1: 7 p.m. Dec. 11, Stage AE, North Shore. \$29.50. 800-745-3000

Clay Aiken: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 11, Palace Theatre, Greensburg. \$39-\$49. 724-836-8000

Gavin DeGraw, Grace Potter, Hedley, The Crab: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 12, Stage AE, North Shore. \$20-\$25. 800-745-3000

Wiz Khalifa: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 12, Consol Energy Center, Uptown. 800-745-3000

Jerrod Niemann, Sean Patrick McGraw: 8 p.m. Dec. 14, Pepsi-Cola Roadhouse, Burgettstown. \$21-\$25. 724-947-1900

Kenny G: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 18, Palace Theater, Greensburg. \$45-\$65. 724-836-8000

Coheed and Cambria: 6:30 p.m. Feb. 7, Stage AE, North Shore. \$26.50. 800-745-3000

Paula Poundstone: 8 p.m. Feb. 22, Carnegie Library Music Hall of Homestead, Munhall. \$29.50-\$37. 412-368-5225

★ Run for your life

★★ Not awesome

★★★ Not too shabby

★★★★ Pretty sweet

★★★★★ Awesome