



hawkeye Entertainment Report

By David Palmer, hawkeye Musicologist

“Art distills sensation and embodies it with enhanced meaning in memorable form or else it is not art.”

~ Jacques Barzun

the music buzz

Beck embraces technology

Release a traditional 13-track CD? “No thanks,” says Beck. Instead, he serves up a collection of songs, remixes and videos that fans can piece together any way they want. Hopefully you’ve heard Beck’s last album entitled *Guero*, which was a cool mix of Latin, pop and rock. With great beats, it contains grooves and melodies to kill for.



More important is how many versions of this album were leaked and released. In 2004, unfinished mixes were available for fans to download. Then came a deluxe CD/DVD edition, complete with seven bonus tracks, a surround-sound mix and interactive video art to accompany every song. The edition was not released as *Guero* but as *Guerolito*, a commercially released companion piece featuring remixes from some of my favorite ambient artists such as Diplo, AdRock and Boards of Canada.

This represents a new way of thinking about an album because there is no album, no static list of 13 songs. Instead, here’s a project that draws on Beck’s Latin leanings and the Dust Brothers’ eclectic production to create a portrait of the artist, circa 2003-2005. Such is the future of the album as envisioned by Beck. It is something to be heard, seen and reconstituted by artist and audience alike. As The Beatles did with *Sgt. Pepper’s* almost four decades ago, Beck has expanded the range and potential of the form. The repercussions here aren’t just creative; the very logistics and economics of the music industry are at stake. As one album becomes a long shelf of songs and products, each carrying its own release date, distribution path and price tag, in the end, fans can create their own versions of the album, stringing favorite songs and remixes into one ideal play list.

Now Beck is doing it again. The multiple versions, the audience interactions, the multimedia experiments – they’re all back in *Guero*’s yet-to-be-titled follow-up, due out this fall. Beck says, “I’d like to find a way to let people truly interact with the records. I put out not just remixes of the songs, but maybe play them like a videogame.” I have always thought Beck to be a cool, inventive artist and one of the most creative. – *David Palmer*



The OC provides platform for Platinum songs

The OC, a weekly chronicle of teenage angst in the Southern California suburbs, has become an unlikely stop on the road to indie-rock superstardom. The show pairs DNA tests, lesbian experimentation and drug overdoses with songs from little-known bands like Death Cab for Cutie and The Killers. The bands see their *OC* exposure turn into Gold and Platinum sales, making the show’s music supervisor, Alexandra Patsavas, the hottest talent scout in the business.

How does Patsavas stay on top of what’s new? When she’s not sifting through 300+ releases sent to her each week, she trolls MySpace.com for fresh sounds. In the past, bands thought being on network TV would whittle away at their indie cred, but now bands are recording exclusive tracks for prime-time dramas. – *D.P.*

Dylan teams up with iTunes

Bob Dylan has teamed with the iTunes music store to offer fans who pre-order his new album the first crack at tickets for his fall tour. Dylan’s *Modern Times* was released in late August via Columbia. Pre-order participants will receive a ticket presale code the following day, giving them a jump on the September 9 general public sale. The presale will be run by Ticketmaster and tour dates have yet to be announced. – *D.P.*

New albums to check out this month



Outkast – *Idlewild*

Hip-hop’s greatest duo gets together again, this time with the Cotton Club-era companion to the new movie *Idlewild*. *Idlewild* is anything but a safe follow-up to the 2003 *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below*. The premise is like Prince’s *Parade: Under the Cherry Moon*, one of his nuttiest and dynamic ’80s albums (actually released in 1990), chronicling his imaginary life as a 1920’s European dandy. As in the movie *Under the Cherry Moon*, *Idlewild* is a cinematic, jazz-age fantasy, but with Andre 3000 and Big Boi playing at a Georgia speakeasy during Prohibition. This album captures the vibe with beauty and excellence, even if the movie falls somewhat short. – *D.P.*

DJ Shadow – The Outsider

A decade ago, DJ Shadow dropped the hip-hop landmark *Endtroducing*. Now back in the Bay Area, Shadow ditches heady electronica for party raps that would sound out of place in “da club.” Intricate beats support rhymes by hardcore MCs like E-40, Keak Da Sneak and Turf Talk, putting to rest any questions about Shadow’s street cred. Fans of his classic sonic palette will welcome a few down-tempo tracks featuring members of the British rock bands Kasabian and Stateless. – *D.P.*

**Movies, DVDs
and other****reel
stuff***Scritti Politti – White Bread Black Beer*

I was always a big fan of Green Gartside, the lead singer and main man in Scritti Politti. In the band’s first album in seven years, Gartside’s voice is so beautiful and the writing is perfect. This album has some wonderfully magical moments. Outstanding tracks include “Dr. Abernathy” and “Throw.” It is good to hear Green back in his game. – *D.P.*

*Emmys drop the ball by not pulling the parody*

Advertisers have always showed compassion at the time of air disasters. It is an unwritten but always followed law that television stations pull airline advertising when a plane crash occurs. So there is little wonder that an opening skit about a plane crash on NBC’s Emmy Awards telecast on Sunday, August 27 disturbed many in light of a Comair commuter jet that had crashed that morning in Lexington, KY, leaving 49 dead.

In the prerecorded opening segment for the Awards show, host Conan O’Brien was tossed around violently in the cabin of an airliner before landing on a beach with a cast member from the TV series *Lost*. Since the program ran live, management at NBC affiliate WLEX in Lexington were helpless. Station Manager Tim Gilbert said, “By the time we began to react, it was over. At the station, we were as horrified as they were at home.” NBC apologized for the incident the next day. – *David Mullen*

Cruise control

When Paramount Pictures dropped Tom Cruise for, among other things, erratic behavior, Viacom Chairman Sumner Redstone seemed poised to try to take Cruise down. Not so fast. Former advertising guy, now Washington Redskins owner, Daniel Snyder announced a partnership with Cruise to help him fund his own production company. The deal is for at least two years. Will it work? The public ultimately will judge, as they did with the less-than-stellar box office receipts for *Mission Impossible: III*. – *D.M.*



what's up on
the
web

*Web becomes haven for celebrity
crime sightings*

Web newcomer tmz.com from AOL Entertainment has made quite a splash recently, with pictures of actor Mel Gibson the night he was arrested to pictures of Paris Hilton after she was sited for driving while impaired. What used to take days for the tabloids to rehash can now be found instantly on the World Wide Web. Now that is progress. – *D.M.*



Yahoo! Music gets personal with Jessica

In an attempt to promote their music download Web site, Yahoo! Music will charge fans \$1.99 to download Jessica Simpson's song "Custom Cuts." But there is a twist: Jessica and her backup singers have recorded 500 names so fans can customize the song with their names in it. Hard to imagine that Jessica would bow to such self-promotion, isn't it? She could have recorded "Mambo No. 5" because it seemed to have 500 names in it. Or maybe she could have simply listed the names of the 500 men that Simpson has been linked with since her breakup with Nick Lachey. – *D.M.*



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*hawkeye Entertainment Editor David Mullen
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