

CD REVIEWS

These United States

Crimes

Web: www.theseunitedstates.net

Area show: Oct. 4, album release at the Rock 'n' Roll Hotel



We were forced to wait seemingly forever for the first album from locals **These United States**, but they delivered the excellent "A Picture of the Three of Us at the Gate to the Garden of Eden" earlier this year. Now Jesse Elliot and gang have turned over a second album in a matter of months. And guess what? It's better than the first. More depth, more layers, more straightforward folk rock.

Lyrical sharp, there isn't a weak link among the rollicking tracks that make up "Crimes." Highlights include "West Won" and "Honor Amongst Thieves." A must. — Robert Fulton

Ximena Sariñana

Mediocre

www.ximenamusic.com



Ximena Sariñana blew away the crowd at the Bowery Ballroom earlier this summer at the Latin Alternative Music Conference in New York with her powerful performance, particularly her jazz scat singing, eyes completely shut, swaying back and forth, arms constantly in motion as if possessed by the über-catchy pop guitar beat of "Vidas Paralelas." "**Mediocre**," Sariñana's debut album,

is anything but mediocre. She's only 22, but her deep powerful voice, smooth singing flow, mastery of jaunty ballads, and inspired adult lyrics of breakups, lament and lost love — particularly in "La Tina" and "Normal" — have given Latin American jazz a much-needed shot in the arm. — Alfredo Flores

Talkdemonic

Eyes at Half Mast

www.talkdemonic.com

Area Show: Oct. 12 at The Red & The Black



Portland, Oregon is a beautiful and progressive city, so it's no surprise natives Kevin O'Connor and Lisa Molinaro have produced an electro-acoustic album to match. The duo's third release is a 14-track instrumental dream. Reverb-heavy analog synth, Wurlitzer, fuzz viola and drums (to name a few) create lush soundscapes that bleed one into the next, no doubt influenced by the success of similar dreamscapers Grizzly Bear and Beach House. The album's only flaw is that it's a bit too dreamy, and a superficial listen leads to discounting this disc as an exercise in homogeneity. However, while the album is certainly an ambient endeavor, its instrumental complexity warrants

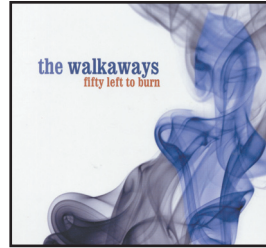
— and stands up to — repeated listens. — Hilary Crowe

The Walkaways

Fifty Left to Burn

www.thewalkaways.com

Area show: Oct. 18 at Regional Food and Drink



This recent release from **The Walkaways** is a mix of rock and country with lyrics that let you sing along. Some of the songs, like "Pinhole Town Blues" and "Half Empty," bring a blues and country feel to the album that is enjoyable even if you don't like country. The lead vocals of Todd Daniel provide a soothing sound that is the definition of easy listening. It's a CD you'll put in your car and not take out for a long time. — Lauren Gring

Junior League

Mitchell Williams Fo' Govena

www.juniorleagueband.com

Area Show: Oct. 4 at the Black Cat



D.C.-based bluegrass outfit Junior League is back with their new album, "Mitchell Williams Fo' Govena." Fans of the band's 2007 debut, "Oh Dear," will surely like the new CD. "MWFG" is a continuation of what the band does well — solid rollicking bluegrass featuring fiddle, banjo and harmonica; and sweeter ballads accentuated by singer Lissy Rosemont. But this isn't a rehash of the old.

The music is deeper, and feels a little heavier, this time around. Check out "South Carolina Blues" and "Lemon." — Robert Fulton

Adrienne

Burn Me Up

www.adrimusic.com

Area show: Jammin' Java, Oct. 8



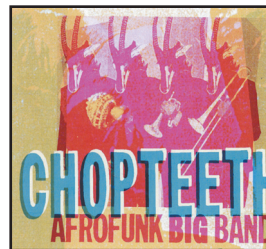
With **Adrienne**, think acoustic folk rock. Sometimes upbeat, often mellow, this Los Angeles-based singer-songwriter certainly has the chops. Highlights include the beautiful opening track, "Flashlight," and the energetic "In the Meantime." With guitar in hand and enchanting voice, Adrienne's "**Burn Me Up**" is worthy of a listen...or two. — Robert Fulton

Chopteeth

Struggle

www.chopteeth.com

Area show: Oct. 5 at the Takoma Park Street Festival



The word "band" doesn't really describe Chopteeth that well: its 13 members are more like an orchestra. The album is a lively mix of funk- and reggae-inspired music that you can move along to. The horns and percussion are prominent throughout the album and don't be surprised to hear vocals in different languages. This album is one to save for summer. Its lively rhythm makes it

perfect for a cookout or lying on the beach. — Lauren Gring

SPILT BEER
 HALF BEER
 FULL BEER

4 BEERS = EXCELLENT!
 3 BEERS = GOOD
 2 BEERS = AVERAGE
 1 BEER = POOR
 SPILT BEER = PARTY FOUL