

# Filter appeals to fans, breaks little ground

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GAMECOCK CRITIC

It's been four years since Filter's debut album, *Short Bus*. Filter temporarily quenched the appetites of everyone who identified with their sounds with single releases such as "Jurassitol" from "The Crow 2" soundtrack, "Can You Trip Like I Do" for the "Spawn" soundtrack (with the help of Crystal Method) and "One" for the "X-Files" soundtrack (it was originally a Three Dog Night song). For the most part, the songs Filter released were easily identifiable as their own. They had produced a sound for themselves. Whether Richard Patrick would ever admit this, producing a definable sound of their own was important for the band. Patrick left Nine Inch Nails for personal and creative reasons, and the only way he would ever break from Trent Reznor's shadow would be to create a sound of his own. Filter's sound is dark, powerful and angry. Typically, it is similar to Nine Inch Nails, so whether Richard Patrick has actually created his own sound is up to the listener and fan.

Much has happened since the release of their first album. Filter's key programmer and producer, Brian Liesegang left the band. Apparently, he wanted more creative control in the band. Patrick felt Brian Liesegang's music was too experimental for Filter. Co-



Filter.

incidentally, like Patrick leaving Reznor, Liesegang left Patrick. So Patrick went back to Chicago. He built his own studio, found a new drummer, wrote new songs and recorded again.

Of Filter and songwriting, Patrick has said, "Fans of Filter are fans because I am my own person." He elaborated on this by saying, "I think records should be like biographies." So taking Patrick's quote and looking at what he has become lately, it is hard to discern what his record would be like. Patrick has changed his image from small-glass-

es-wearing screamer of "Hey Man Nice Shot" to a leather-wearing GQ front man.

From their first radio release, "Welcome to the Fold," it seems that Filter has succumbed to the mainstream sound of music (had Patrick taken on the pretensions of rock stars like Michael Stipe?). The song is weak; it does not have the hard bass, loud guitar and massive feedback found in their other songs. However, the radio doesn't play the same breakdown that is on the album. The breakdown begins with the lyrics "Mom-

ma give me my medicine." On the album, the background music produces an ambient beat that enriches the song, which is nothing like the radio version. Nevertheless, the mediocre guitar riffs contradict the satirical lyrics of Patrick. It doesn't work here. A person can't be openly critical of a society, yet conform to the mediocre sound of a genre. But as you listen, you wonder, perhaps he can. Maybe he's saying something more underneath the topical impression; his breakdown would imply there was much more going on here.

The next couple of songs on the album produce the average sound that can be found on any alt-rock album. However, Patrick's lyrics are strong. He produces the story of Captain Bligh with self-deprecating lines like "I'm a blood soaked man." The band fully blossoms toward the end of the album. Filter slowly reveals the next step in their progression. Patrick demonstrates his full vocal range. It's completely fitting. The anger so prevalent in him has to be quenched, and when it is, there is a passionate, melodic, overwhelmingly powerful sound. Filter exchanges the hard bass and guitar for slowly developing, slowly erupting sounds. In the song "Skinny," Filter reaches the height of the album. A sound mixed with an articulate lead guitar and a distorted rhythm, Patrick preaches, "Don't ever let them see you cheat, don't ever let them see you bleed." And for a minute, Patrick's pretensions are dropped, he's revealing a part of himself, and the album redeems itself. For the die-hard Filter fan, Patrick remains strong with his famous screech at intermittent moments. Filter's music mirrors their current image. They go between the glam of rock stardom and the real-life outlook of their fans. In the end, if you're a Filter fan, you'll most likely like the album.

Song that will convince you to buy the album or not: "Skinny"

Overall: Fifty percent crap.

## Charts:

### Billboard 200: Top Albums

1. "Christina Aguilera," Christina Aguilera. RCA.
2. "Forever," Puff Daddy. Bad Boy.
3. "Millennium," Backstreet Boys. Jive. (Platinum)
4. "Significant Other," Limp Bizkit. Flip. (Platinum)
5. "Mary," Mary J. Blige. MCA.
6. "...Baby One More Time," Britney Spears. Jive. (Platinum)
7. "Supernatural," Santana. Arista. (Platinum)
8. "Devil Without A Cause," Kid Rock. Lava. (Platinum)
9. "Melvin Flynt — Da Hustler," Noreaga. Penalty.
10. "Ricky Martin," Ricky Martin. C2. (Platinum)

### Mainstream Rock Singles

1. "Scar Tissue," Red Hot Chili Peppers. Warner Bros.
2. "Enemy," Days Of The New. Outpost.
3. "Higher," Creed. Wind-up.
4. "You Wanted More," Tonic. Universal.
5. "Keep Away," Godsmack. Republic.
6. "Can't Change Me," Chris Cornell. A&M.
7. "The Dolphin's Cry," Live. Radioactive.
8. "Nookie," Limp Bizkit. Flip.
9. "Get Born Again," Alice In Chains. Columbia.
10. "Welcome To The Fold," Filter. Reprise.

### WUSC Top 10 Albums

1. "The Beta Band," The Beta Band. Astralwerks.
2. "Remedy," Basement Jaxx. Astralwerks.
3. "The Golden Band," American Analos Set. Emperor Jones.
4. "See It Another Way," Macha. Jet Set.
5. "Do the Collapse," Guided by Voices. TVT.
6. "Silur," Tarwater. Mute.
7. "Soul Ecstasy," Inner Thumbs. Emperor Norton.
8. "Black Elvis," Kool Keith. Ruffhouse.
9. "Avenue B," Iggy Pop. Virgin.
10. "The Soft Bulletin," Flaming Lips. Warner Bros.

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