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THE MIX

THEY SAID IT

HENRY WARD BEECHER:
"Vigilance is not only the price of liberty, but of success of any sort."

God's gift to music



Christian music has entered the mainstream, and with artists on major labels, it is growing in popularity

BY HOLLY DUTTON
THE GAMECOCK

The progression of music over time can be a gauge of the changes within a society. The integration of Christian music into the mainstream has been one of the recent developments in popular music as such bands as P.O.D. and Blindside receive airplay on MTV and MTV2. And Lifehouse, though not on a Christian label, has a

Christian message, and its music is now accepted more than ever.

Big record labels such as Atlantic Records are now more willing to sign Christian bands such as Project 86; and these bands are proving that Christian music shouldn't be limited to gospel and church hymns.

Project 86

Project 86, a hardcore band

signed to Atlantic Records, just released its album "Truthless Heroes." Inside lies an autobiography of a typical hero looking through pop culture to find some source of fulfillment.

The band's Web site, www.project86.com, describes the album as "the story of modern civilization; all the answers we are feeding ourselves lead to nowhere. We have nowhere to turn and no one to look to. It is a story about self-loathing, the human void and the role that contemporary pop culture plays in exploiting our own insecurities."

The band's Web site also says, "The music we write is the process of self-discovery amidst a musical and cultural landscape that is uninspiring at best. We hope to be a small light of true inspiration in the middle of our new millennium of consumer-friendly art and sound."

Blindside

Blindside, a Swedish rock/metal group, has done just what its name claims: blindsided the mainstream music industry; its hit single off its newly released album, "Silence," is the song most often added into rotation at rock and alternative radio stations nationwide. If you miss the band on the radio, you can also now see its

video "Pitiful" on MTV2. You might also recognize the band's music from the new Xbox game "NHL Hockey 2003."

Sonny Sandoval of P.O.D., a Christian metal band that has also made it into the mainstream, says on Blindside's Web site, www.blindside-silence.com, that "Silence" is, by far, the best album of the year — a refreshing break from all the cookie-cutter acts that are out there today."

Sara Groves

Sara Groves makes the type of music a listener could fall asleep to — not because it's boring, but because it's so soothing. Her new CD, "All Right Here," has a folk and pop sound and, according to www.billboard.com, "its appeal is not limited only to a Christian market."

"It's amazing to me the doors music can open," she says on her Web site, www.saragroves.com. She says singers can tell listeners "about Christ and who he is ... in the music."

"I used to struggle with the fact that I don't write as poetic as some people," Groves said. "I used to think good music was something you couldn't understand, all these veiled literary references that the average person couldn't decipher."

But, she says, when it comes

down to it, "my music is not so much about the poetry or the art as it is about being understood."

Groves, an English teacher, uses not only her voice but her literary knowledge to share what is most important to her, and has successfully interwoven her faith and convictions in her music.

John Reuben

Eminem and old-school Vanilla Ice have redeemed the white male by proving that, though he might not be able to jump, he can rap. Reuben's mother was in an Ohio-based assistance program, which was started by an ex-gang member from Brooklyn. A church sponsored the program, and Reubens grew up on the church's property, where he interacted with inner-city children from across the country.

Reuben had his first lyrics published in elementary school and began freestyling in junior high. Reuben, at the age of 18, saw all kinds of hip-hop come through the reggae club at which he ran a hip-hop night.

His debut album, "Are We There Yet?" was a hit with his positive lyrics and evident hip-hop talent. His follow-up album, "Hindsight," was released this year, and brings a

♦ MUSIC, SEE PAGE 10

Clockwise from top left: Project 86, Sara Groves, and Blindside. Project 86 and Blindside have been signed to major record labels.

PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK



TOP 10

These were the most requested songs on USC's student radio station from Sep. 30 - Oct. 6.

1. "VELOCITY OF SOUND" Apples in Stereo
2. "FIGHT DIRTY" Forty Fives
3. "START THE PANIC" Agenda!
4. "TROUBLE BOUND" Blasters
5. "CAUTION" Hot Water Music
6. "GOOD MORNING BEAUTIFUL" Irving
7. "CLOSE COVER BEFORE STRIKING" Luna
8. "LIGHT AND MAGIC" Ladytron
9. "FINALLY THE PUNK ROCKERS..." Flaming Lips
10. "GUSTO" Guttermouth

THE YEAR IN MUSIC

Sunny Day Real Estate made picture-perfect emo

1994

**Diary**

CHARLES TOMLINSON
THE GAMECOCK

Sunny Day Real Estate broke up for the second time in 2000. But, during its existence, it was an interesting creature. In 1994, during the band's early stages, it maintained an air of secrecy; it did only one interview and released only one photo to the public.

"Diary," the album the band released that year, reflects SDRE's clandestine sensibilities.

The band's name is nowhere to be found on the album cover, which features only a painting of a toy family standing around a smoking toaster in a darkened kitchen. The album's credits, delivered in an almost-conversational tone, can be found in small type on the back of the liner notes.

It's easy to get drawn into the artistic and poetic nature of the liner notes, but they become just icing when one actually listens to the music.

SDRE is the quintessential post-emo indie rock band because of this album, which gives perfect examples of the genre's trademarks: soft-to-loud dynamics, poetic and crooning vocals, and shimmering guitar parts. "In Circles," "Song About an Angel," "Sometimes" and the band's trademark song "Seven" are picture-perfect post-indie emo tunes.

Jeremy Enigk's vocal range is amazing; he might sing softly at first, but a burst from his lungs during a powerful chorus can wrench up every human emotion. Dan Hoerner's lead guitar playing is beautifully simplistic, and William Goldsmith's rhyth-

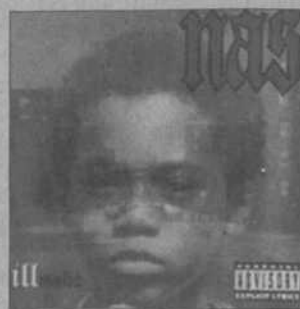
mic nuances are always surprising. Nate Mendel, who later joined the Foo Fighters, kept the lower ranges interesting with fluid, melodic bass playing.

A new album is in the works from the Fire Theft, which comprises Enigk, Goldsmith and Mendel in a reunion of sorts. It won't be the same as SDRE, but

it's always great to hear anything these amazing musicians do.

Comments on these stories? E-mail gamecockmixeditor@hotmail.com

Nas changed the world of hip-hop

**Illmatic**

BY JUSTIN BAJAN
THE GAMECOCK

In the year 1994, the world of hip-hop was divided into two equally popular musical hemispheres: the West Coast and the East Coast. In the west, Dr. Dre's signature G-Funk sound

reigned, as well as gangsta rappers such as Snoop Doggy Dog, 2Pac and Ice Cube. In the east, you had grimy street rappers such as the Notorious B.I.G., Onyx and the Wu-Tang Clan.

But there was one rapper who created an album that seemed to levitate in comparison to his counterparts. Nas was his name, a moniker that described his rugged style and honest approach toward music. Nas sent tremors throughout the streets with his cameo on Main Source's "Live at the Barbecue" back in '91 and took three years to finish his opus, "Illmatic."

"Illmatic" is a near-perfect amalgam of stellar production and lyrics. Ostensibly, no emcee could miss with a line up of producers such as DJ Premier,

Pete Rock and Large Professor, but it takes a genius lyricist to outshine his beats, and Nas did just that.

On "N.Y. State of Mind," Nas reflects his mix of street sensibility and fine-tuned rhymes with lines such as "Beyond the walls of intelligence, life is defined/I think of crime, when I'm in a New York state of mind."

There is no weak song on this 10-track masterpiece, which could have catalyzed a potentially flawless career for Nas. But he decided to forsake his Nasty image for a champagne-sipping hustler named Nas Escobar, disappointing the many fans of his first work. Now Nas is desperately trying to recapture the magic he had on "Illmatic," but without critical success.