

NEW MUSIC CRITIQUES

Music Connection's executive committee rates recorded music on a scale of 1 to 10. Number 1 represents the lowest possible score, 10 represents the highest possible score. A final score of 5 denotes an average, competent artist. For more information, see Submission Guidelines next page.



Brother Shadrach

Contact: brothershadrach@gmail.com; 661-317-9125
Web: brothershadrach.com
Seeking: All Opportunities
Style: Hip-Hop
AMP Username: brothershadrach

L yrically progressive, musically dynamic, with Tribe Called Quest and 8-bit essences co-mingled, this artist has a compelling vision. "Do What U Can" disarms you with its modesty and insight. While "Lonely" has some lumpiness to its flow, it has some hinky FX that keep you glued as the artist laments the loss of friends. "Do You Justice" is his tribute to a significant other that's a bit too wordy at first, but then gels nicely. Skilled as he is, this ambitious Brother would do well to throttle back his perfectionism and welcome more spontaneity.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 9
- Music..... 9
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE: 8.4



Chasing Saints

Contact: N/A
Web: Myspace.com/chasingsaints
Seeking: Label
Style: Rock, Pop
AMP Username: chasingsaints

I t's no wonder this band's had TV placements. Crafty in conception and flawless in execution, these straightforward songs aim for and hit the mainstream bullseye. The band's specialty is the heartfelt ballad, exemplified by "Someday," the kind of wounded plea that singer Ray Zeiter nails perfectly. "Lose" is another fine example of this as the band seem perfectly geared for country crossover appeal. Perhaps the only thing that could improve these warm, clean recordings would be some piano or organ placed underneath.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 8
- Music..... 8
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE: 8.0



Miss Willie Brown

Contact: N/A
Web: MySpace.com/misswilliebrown
Seeking: Label
Style: Country, Psychobilly
AMP Username: misswilliebrown

A ctually this is a pair of powerhouse frontwomen, Kasey and Amanda, who put it over with color, conviction and the sort of rowdy balls-to-the-wall irreverence that would easily appeal to, say, Kenny Chesney fans. But listening to "Bonafide," "The Bible," and especially "Rodeo Queen," you get a sense that this is a rare country act whose wide crossover potential might actually result from the artists' own Hot 100 tastes, sounds that go far afield of country, so that even R&B/Pop fans could get off on what these bareknuckle babes are doing.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 8
- Music..... 8
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE: 8.0



Nephew

Contact: 818-270-0773
Web: MySpace.com/nephew818
Seeking: Label, Management
Style: Rap, Hip-Hop
AMP Username: nephew

R appers who want to hear how to vary their cadences for maximum impact should check out this artist, especially his "Here I Come," a deftly recorded song that rides dynamically on piano, bass and strings. The epic-sounding "I Dot It.." is another noteworthy outing, with a magnetic, buoyant beat and serious, articulate lyrics. We only wish the song returned more to its chorus. All in all, self-produced Nephew has exceptional skills, well above the average, but he will want to upgrade some of the standard-issue tones in his tracks.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 8
- Music..... 8
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE: 8.0



Junkstar

Contact: Diid Osman, dandywarhol@oink.co.uk
Web: MySpace.com/junkstarband
Seeking: First Album Deal
Style: Electro, Rock, Pop
AMP Username: IanConstant

H ere's a Brit quintet that ride a wave of pulsing synths and pounding beats, topping it all off with an ebullient male and female vocal attack. "Blue Bottles" and "This Could Be..." are heady, uplifting, catchy tunes with a thoroughly modern dance-pop edge, while "Amy" is a straightahead '80s synth popper, the only tune we heard that puts the guitars out front. Its chiming finale is a highlight. We recommend that Junkstar put the vocals even more out front than is depicted already; these performers are too good to hold back.

- Production..... 7
- Lyrics..... 8
- Music..... 8
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE: 7.8



Switchback

Contact: waygoodnorth@gmail.com
Web: waygoodmusic.com
Seeking: Film/TV, Booking, Publishing/Composing
Style: Folk, Rock, Acoustic, Indie, Americana, Singer-Songwriter
AMP Username: switchback

T he words "American roots & Celtic soul" only begin to describe this unusual act, whose vocal prowess is as pure as it is unique. While there is a modern folk-pop sensibility here, the trad roots of Brit and American folk clearly resonate in "Mayfly Dance," "Absolutely Stunning," and "Black Mountain," and it makes for a curious concoction, especially due to a distinct throwback aspect that lends a formality and rigidity to the performances. Still, there is no denying the stunning vocal blends that are achieved by this duo.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 7
- Music..... 7
- Vocals..... 9
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE: 7.8

DAVID HANLEY



Alastair Greene Band

Contact: Doug Deutsch PR, 213-924-4901, dougdeutschpr@gmail.com
Web: www.agsongs.com
Seeking: Booking, Agent, Distribution
Style: Blues, Classic Rock, Roots
AMP Username: agbluesband

Greene certainly isn't reinventing the blues-rock wheel with these recordings, but he sure burns rubber whenever it's his cue to rip a solo. Whether it's the Elmore James type stomper, "Walkin' In Circles," or the ZZ Top-ish boogie, "Cut You Loose," Greene's leads are either impeccably clean or eminently dirty, whatever is called for. There's great band energy here, too, captured with a live club feel. Greene, who also works with the likes of Alan Parsons, is a fiery performer who's perfect meat for a label such as Blind Pig Records.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 7
- Music..... 7
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE : 7.6



John Enghauser

Contact: Doug Deutsch PR, 213-924-4901, dougdeutschpr@gmail.com
Web: www.johnenghauser.com
Seeking: Label, Distribution, Film/TV, Agency, Investor, Radio
Style: Rock, Fusion, Electro-Acoustic, Roots
AMP Username: 6562

Solo performer Enghauser is a perfectionist, his amiable, laid back recordings demonstrating exceptional attention to detail, especially in his acoustic guitar and the way instruments are placed in the mix. What's distinctive about his brand of pop-rock is its decided smooth jazz influence in some of the guitar interludes ("Blame") and in his use of the Rhodes keys. His craftiness, however, sometimes robs his recordings of spontaneity. This skillful artist would do well to capture that quality in future performances.

- Production..... 8
- Lyrics..... 7
- Music..... 7
- Vocals..... 8
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE : 7.6



RedLight

Contact: orthlieblaurent@hotmail.com
Web: MySpace.com/redlightspiral
Seeking: Tour Booking Worldwide
Style: Experimental, Rock
AMP Username: OfficialRedLight

Marseilles, France band RedLight bring a wide array of influences to the table, as "Rock Is Dead" demonstrates; deploying a dazzling spectrum of guitar tones, the song is a hard-driving pastiche that seems to incorporate myriad eras of rock and electro into one sonic punch. What's so cool is how the band can connect it to hooks that stick. We were also taken with "Emma Loves The Planets" and its spacey, celestial guitars. If ever a band needed a producer who could distill and refine its boundless creative energy, RedLight is it.

- Production..... 7
- Lyrics..... 8
- Music..... 8
- Vocals..... 7
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE : 7.6



Immune

Contact: 818-748-9080
Web: Myspace.com/immunerock
Seeking: Label, Management, Agency, Film/TV Licensing
Style: Rock
AMP Username: immune

Rob Schulze fronts this promising band, whose anguished, bitter lyrics are warmed over by effective grunge harmonics that result in music with real commercial potential. It's as if Immune, though dedicated to the dark vibe, cannot completely hide its poppy proclivities. Our primary advice is that the band needs to inject proper dynamics into its recordings at key moments when a sudden sonic explosion is essential. This "marching band to the Apocalypse" should strive for more songs like "I'd Rather Die," a strong radio-ready contender.

- Production..... 7
- Lyrics..... 7
- Music..... 8
- Vocals..... 7
- Musicianship..... 8

SCORE : 7.4



Death Valley Pornstar

Contact: info@deathvalleypornstar.com
Web: deathvalleypornstar.com
Seeking: Management
Style: Alt-Rock
AMP Username: deathvalleypornstar

When it comes to these recordings it's all about the dirtyass rhythm guitars and the strong, strident lead vocals of singer Jezebel. While both are well situated in the mix, the rest of the performances suffer from neglect, particularly the guitar solos and the muscular yet unimaginative, piledriving drums. "It's Not Me, It's You" is the band's strongest outing, wherein Jezebel's voice suggests Carrie Underwood in a foul, kickass mood. Maybe this hard-rocking female fronted foursome should explore their country reflexes a little?

- Production..... 7
- Lyrics..... 6
- Music..... 6
- Vocals..... 7
- Musicianship..... 6

SCORE : 6.4



Dertybird

Contact: 256-710-1309; dertybirdbook@mac.com
Web: Myspace.com/dertybirdmusic
Seeking: Label, Management
Style: Southern Rock, Blues
AMP Username: dertybird

Dedicated analoggers, Dertybird carry the torch for the swampy blues-rock tradition. Listeners will hear echoes of influences, of pioneers and their descendants, in songs such as "People Change," "Movin' On" and "You Go," which achieve a warm, vibrant, live-recording fizz. By channeling their heroes, this Austin band (Clayton Colvin, JT Holt & friends) create something familiar yet subtly unique, the kind of alt-blues-rock that's perched somewhere between the Black Crowes and the Black Keys. Great stuff for, say, a '70s-era crime flick.

- Production..... 6
- Lyrics..... 7
- Music..... 6
- Vocals..... 6
- Musicianship..... 7

SCORE : 6.4

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: There is absolutely no fee or charge to get a critique in Music Connection. We critique recordings that have yet to connect with an established distributor. To be considered you must first join AMP. Music Connection's social network for musicians. AMP membership is free. See <http://musicconnection.com/amp>. Please DO NOT send a package to our offices; we no longer accept them. All submissions are randomly selected and reviewed by an executive committee at the magazine. If you are chosen to be critiqued, we will contact you by the phone number/e-mail you've specified. Because of the amount of submissions we receive, we cannot guarantee that everyone will be critiqued. If your music does have distribution with an established distributor, it is not eligible for New Music Critiques. Instead, it is eligible for our CD Reviews section.