

July 2001

This summer's stream of projects proved to be as diversified as ever. Definitely keeping Brent and Aaron on their toes. First in was singer/songwriter Dave Spencer with his second solo project (distributed by Red Eye). This one was recorded out at Rick Miller's (of Southern Culture On The Skids fame) new studio The Ranch. Dave is awesome, like early Bruce Springsteen. Especially on the ballads like "This Old Truck", definitely worth a listen. Next up was Duke University's female A' Capella group; Out of the Blue with another contemporary vocal record featuring the fine engineering of Wes Lachot. Dark heavy metal anarchists Catharsis were in with another project for their upcoming international release on Crime Records. The following day, Catharsis's alter ego-Umlaut, had a short EP for European release. Mr. Lady Records press dominating artists Le Tigre (People, Rolling Stone, NPR) brought in a powerful, fun, and dancy collection of songs produced by local veteran Chris Stamey (Ryan Adams/Whiskeytown, Tift Merrit, Alejandro Escovedo, Moltheni). Local indy-rockers -Vibrant Green, showed up with an EP recorded and mixed by John Plymale (Meat Puppets, Squirrel Nut Zippers, Athenaeum, Kim Richey, Far Too Jones). Hawaiian transplant- Cyril Lance, came in with a powerful blues record engineered by Wes Lachot (Gladhands, Terry Anderson), and featuring members of Government Mule. Cyril can really play, if your a blues fan look out for this record. Local punk-rockers, Cliff Mann and Ron Liberti (formerly of Pipe) brought in their latest project; The Ghosts of Rock, which was recorded and mixed by Jerry Kee. Virgin Recording artists Cracker, mastered "Guarded by Monkey's" their upcoming album due out this winter. Co-produced by David Lowery (Counting Crows, Camper Van Beethoven) and personal favorite - John Morand (Sparklehorse, Joan Osborne, Hanson, Gibb Droll), the record really shows Cracker's versatility and strength as one of America's strongest rock bands. Recorded entirely at Sound of Music in Richmond, VA, the record shows off the facilities beautiful room tones and features a virtual army of drummers. New York transplants Astronauts of Antiquity, engineered and co-produced by local rising star Tom Mohbat brought in a single "Getting Better" that had all of the Kitchen staff singing along. The song features soothing female vocals over a hypnotic groove that uniquely blends Indian and Hip-Hop sensibilities. Keep your ears out for this group. Composer/ musician Cliff Cotton brought in a self produced contemporary jazz project that once again proves that you can make a good sounding record at home. Jimbo Mathus, just returning from playing the role of music director and guitarist for Buddy Guy's latest critically acclaimed record, brought in his own blues infected Knockdown Society project for Mammoth Records. Jimbo or 'Jas' is definitely the real deal. Steven S. Little, the charismatic front man to garage/surf big band Czar Caviar (think Buster Poindexter meets White Stripes) was in with definitely the most unique garage record we've heard. Next up was a gorgeous recording of the Tidewater Guitar Orchestra that featured ten(!) guitarists playing baha, tenor and standard guitars. Pieces performed included works by Copland, Mozart, and a commissioned piece by the L.A. Guitar Quartet, . Local producer/engineer Chris finished his band Empty City's first full-length release which was a year in the making. The album features 80's pop influences with modern drum grooves - a trend that we have been noticing lately. Bishop Larry Jackson brought in a powerful gospel project that was a collective effort between two producers, one locally and one in Atlanta. Jason Levasseur of Life in General fame, brought in one of the best sounding records this year titled "Watching the Girls Go By". Engineered & produced by Greensboro native John Pfiffner at HNBC Studios, the album features complex arrangements that come off just beautifully and without pretense. The album really is a stellar effort from all parties involved, definitely worth a listen. Closing out the month were computer gaming composer Tom Cobrick with several compositions and heavy, heavy metal group Humanicide.