

DR. DEMO

"Nurse, quickly...
I can hear a beat!"

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The Doc reviews the best of this month's unsigned talent...



Deerstone County - Four track demo CD

www.myspace.com/deerstonecounty

This curious hybrid of Echo and the Bunnymen meets Kings of Leon is actually quite engaging once your ears start to become accustomed to the growling rock vocal drawing plaintively across a solidly planted indie-rock landscape. Lead-in track 'Goodbye' is a stirring U2 style epic that breaks all the rules. Sam Kenworthy's vocal sounds completely incongruous with the music - his singing style is less Bono and more Brad Roberts (Crash Test Dummies - remember them?) but somehow the band manage to make it work. Occasionally it starts to sound a little labored and contrived, Sam's vocal histrionics begin to grate a little bit after a while but the music throbs with the bleak beauty that hallmarks the best northern indie bands from The Smiths, The Fall to New Order and beyond. You can still easily imagine this lot slotting neatly onto Radio 1's Evening Session playlist.

Weird, but we like it. A good effort.

Simon Doherty - Five Track Demo CD

www.myspace.com/simondoherty

Simon describes himself as a 'singer-songwriter' but fear yee not; there is not a trace of self regarding 'I've-wet-the-bed' acoustic dirge on this rather fine showcase of the 22 year old Scot's rather humbling talent. This is a remarkably self-assured set of slightly quirky pop songs from a young man who recalls the precocious talent of a Marc Bolan, Mica or even Badly Drawn Boy. This mature and carefully crafted pop maybe isn't going to ring many bells with the more vacuous music fan who has Westlife perched at the top of the 'Most Played' section of their iPod but people with two brain cells and the attention span of a gnat are best left polishing the bonnets of their Subaru Impreza's and not troubling themselves with anything that's going to overload their over-taxed monkey brains. This is quality selection from a true talent. More please...

Audit Control - To the Universe Four Track Demo CD

www.myspace.com/auditcontrol1

Groove-a-licious indie rock from Huddersfield and Leeds-based band Audit Control. Despite a rather lame production that cruelly robs some of the wallop from the overall sound the tunes aren't too bad. 'Heart Electric' overcomes a rather generic baggy rhythmic pattern with some stop-start dynamics and an off kilter middle eight where a descending chromatic guitar riff suddenly whips the rug from under the listener's feet. Nice. While there isn't anything here that quite screams 'next big thing' this is still pretty solid stuff and as so long as the band try to keep one step ahead of falling back into post-baggy cliché, Audit Control - despite their bloody awful name - suggest some real talent lurks somewhere in these grooves.

DEMO OF THE MONTH

Poncharello

Turn on, tune in, drop out...EP

www.poncharello.com

Brontosaurus-sized guitar sounds and vocal harmonies so tight that an ant would have trouble squeezing between their buttocks are but two of the many remarkable elements that set this French rock band apart from the pack. Behind the faintly tongue-in-cheek element to this energetic post-hardcore are lean arrangements and accomplished playing that recalls early Green Day and the fact that the band sings all of their material in English doesn't do them any harm from a broader perspective either. The energy sounds youthful and fun but the assured performances suggest a seasoned band that has clocked up their fair share of stage-time, I would think that it's a safe bet that Poncharello are past masters when it comes to tearing the roof off when the play live. Sadly, Mrs. Demo and I aren't planning to holiday in France this year or else we would be planning our vacation around Poncharello's live dates. C'est Tres Bon, Mes Amis! **PM**



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