

Disagreeable

25 January 2023 | Jonah D, editor-in-chief

What We're listening to:

Album: Double Nickels On the Dime | the Minutemen

Just look at the cover for a second. Do you see the speedometer, 55 mph? The highway 10 sign? Now do you get the joke? A glorious piece of history, basically the White Album of the LA punk scene.

Track: Ghost Rider | Suicide

Electro... punk... rockabilly? The ideal blend of Phillip Glass and 50s rock & roll with NY art sensibilities, Suicide sums their entire mission in this song, maybe the catchiest I've ever heard.

Track: Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got that Swing) | Thelonious Monk

Thelonious Monk squeezes 30s era classics (soon to be standards) through the fine mesh of his personality and ends up with this. I guess we can't ask for much better.

Reviews:

True Love Will Find You In the End [track]
1984
Daniel Johnston

Author: Jonah Dayley

And now to everyone's favorite topic of discussion, Authenticity. Specifically, I'll wax prosaic on so-called Indie Cred, also known as the difference between being a poseur and a true honest devotee. It is often said that indie music evolved from punk as a branch of the same ideology, but with different musical styles. This means that it takes the DIY ethic and avoidance of pomp, and then ran in a

different direction entirely. From the basis of avoiding the glamor and imagined lack of realness from the music punk broke from, it became deeply ingrained in the culture that Authenticity was the gold standard. Of course this spread to indie and other forked subcultures where it evolved and changed independently. After 30-50 years of this, Authenticity in indie mostly just resulted in squabbling and needless declaration of people 'selling out' or being poseurs. I believe that really, underneath all the posturing and deep set issues, what people are truly looking for is open and unguarded honesty. People just want the truth, not someone's distorted version of something that might have been true at one point.

Under this interpretation of indie cred, than this song is among the greatest ever written. On every level, this song is as honest an authentic as you could possibly imagine. On every level, from the callous fingered fumbles to the reedy and directly sincere vocals to the succinct and direct lyrics:

Don't be sad, I know you will / But don't give up until / True love finds you in the end
This is a promise with a catch / Only if you're looking will it find you / 'Cause true love is searching too / But how can it recognize you? / Unless you step out into the light

That's the long and the short of it.

Pinkerton
1996
Weezer

Highlights: El Scorcho, The Good Life, Why Bother?

Author: Andrew Neydelmen

Weezer fans aren't exactly known for being the intellectual type, and many wouldn't associate Weezer's rock with Italian Opera, but thanks to the work of Rivers Cuomo, Pinkerton pretty strongly parallels the plot of Puccini's Opera, The Madame Butterfly.

The gist of *The Madame Butterfly* is that Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton, an American, arrives in Japan, and he meets a Geisha Girl, Cio Cio San. They fall in love, but, Pinkerton being the bombastic and far-travelling man he is, is forced to leave, leaving a heartbroken and tarnished Cio Cio San.

Weezer's *Pinkerton* uses its parallels to *The Madame Butterfly* to criticize the 'revering of the rockstar'. In songs like "Tired of Sex", "Getchoo", and "The Good Life", ideas about the commoditization of women, and how the self-important and rockstar attitude that Pinkerton has causes him to dispose of his flings left and right, including Cio Cio San. All of this is in stark contrast to the end of the album, especially in the song "Butterfly", which, like the opera, uses the butterfly as a symbol of fleeting and fragile love, a love that someone with a boyish nature, like Pinkerton, could very well destroy. The music of *Pinkerton* follows closely behind these themes. Instead of the complete precision and metronomic qualities of the *Blue Album*, *Pinkerton* runs ragged, extending guitar distortion to the logical extreme and knocking everything off time with the slip-ups one would expect from a regretful rocker. At any given moment it sounds like it's flinging itself apart. These imperfections act to further the humanizing factors of *Pinkerton*, creating a record both powerful in message and relatable enough to listen to on repeat.

Nowhere

1990

Ride

Highlights: Vapour Trails, Seagull, Dreams
Burn Down

Author: Jonah Dayley

Oxford, one of the wonders of the late-sometimes-great British Empire. Formed in the early 12th century, it's best known for its bell foundry, bussing system, and gifting Supergrass to the world. Possibly its greatest claim to fame, its international calling-card, would be its status as the origin of Ride.

All jests aside, Ride is in my opinion one of the best bands to ever hail from the UK. After my bloody valentine (obligatory critical plug), I'd credit them as the best band in Shoegaze, flat out. What is that, you may ask? Shoegaze is a sub-genre of rock & roll that came from bands who, rather than changing it up by getting more technical with their instruments, simply turned up their amps and added as many effects pedals as could fit on stage. And so you have the official genealogy: The Rhonettes to the Beach Boys, the Beach Boys to the Cocteau Twins, the Cocteau Twins to Jesus & the Mary Chain, and finally Jesus & the Mary Chain to Ride. And so here we are.

The music of *Nowhere*, of course, repurposes elements of each of these bands. An important distinction between them and a fair bit of other Shoegaze is their distinct lack of fatalism and pretension, which stands out immediately. Rather the tortured heroin posturings of JAMC or the melodrama (albeit earned) from MBV, Ride basically feels like a group of guys who ended up lucky enough to all be on stage together. The songs are simple in structure, but richly detailed in every sense, produced in such a way as to almost require them to be listened to at extreme volumes. And they're beautiful like that. Ride frontman once described their writing process as finding 4 chords they'd be willing to play for hours at a time, and then add seemingly infinite layers of melody overtop. Rather than caking their melody in extreme noise, they just take the noise and cover it with such fine ornamentation that you can't help but love it. I will also concede that the cover is ideal too, because the music may as well be an ocean of sound, full deep with tiny elements of perfection and beauty. I don't know where they got the idea from, though, because Oxford is entirely landlocked.

Any review suggestions? New releases from new artists? Want to write for DisagreEeable?

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