Clearing the confusion: The two sides of Everclear

E STREET CORN



Craig Montoya isn't so sure about his whereabouts when asked where he was calling from the basisi jubilanty declared:

STEPHANE A. CASOLA Michigan!' But maybe that's what touring does to a guy. You see it was Everelen's first headlining tour in about two yoars. And Morguette isn't an easy name to remember when you're from Washington.

"We've been in the studio for a

Washington.

"We've been in the studio for a long time," he said with a sigh. The result came in the form of two contrasting full-length releases in 2000 - the pop-oriented Songe From An American Movie Vol. One: Learning How To Smile and the brash Songe From An American Movie Vol. Two: Good Time For a Bad Attitude.

It was quite an unconventional decision to release these records just four months apart, rather than stagger the albums with at least one year of touring in between them. But the project was an unusual one from the very start.

Two sides

Two sides

"Volume One was originally
going to be Art's solo record,"
explained Montoya. "He started
it. We went on a couple of tours.
He had throat surgery. When he
went back to it after a fourmonth break...he called Greg
and I up and asked us to listen
to a couple tracks."

The preject wear's taking

to a couple tracks."

The project wasn't taking shape as singer and songwriter Art Alexakis intended and soon Montoya and drummer Greg Eklund were working on new songs for the record – two cleased as the singles Wonderful and AM Radio.

ful and AM Radio.
All of a sudden, it became the
unlikely follow-up to Everelear's
So Much For The Afterglow.
Complete with a cover of Van
Morrison's Brown Eyed Girl and
an ode to Otis Redding, the
record showed a sort of music
nestalgia and penchant for pop
culture, right down to its American Gothic-inspired cover art.
"Valume One used more weedles

"Volume One used more vocals

to where we would normally put more guitars. It seemed to work. We always knew we were going to do Volume Two, a full-on rock and roll record."

and roll record."

John E Two boasts the radio single When It All Goes Wrong Again. If asked to choose, Montaya dmits Vol. Two better reflects the rock he was raised on. "We pumped out the whole thing pretty fast," he said. "We knew exactly what we wanted. We played loud. We played angry. That's what we're about."

He admits though that the decision to release what seemed to the public to be two albums at once was a bit confusing, "People didn't know what to think."
"My brother and my father

"My brother and my father both played guitar," said Mon-toya, who grew up in Spokane, Wash. "There were always gui-tars hanging around the house."

tars hanging around the house."
Montoya grabbed his first guitar at age 15 and held on tight.
'In the 80s, everyone wanted to
be Eddie VanHalen," he
explained. "It was the only thing
I ever really felt passionate
about when I was a kid. When
things got tough, I just listened
to music. When I was upset

the music."

While Montoya's small towe existence didn't offer as much exposure to popular television and radio, he said he grew up listening to rockabilly, his father's Oldies station and learning about muscle cars. His quintessential "American movie" might fall in line with American Graffiti. I didn't watch TV as a kid, he said. I didn't watch The Brady Bunch.
Scaling down their 1 hour 20

Brady Bunch.

Scaling down their 1 hour 20 minute headline set to 50 minutes for the Matchbox Twenty tour, Montoya said: "Wo're gonna put on the best show we can." The difference between headlining and touring with another radio heavyweight is simply the size of the venue. Everclear will go from performing in clubs and theaters catering to about 3,000 screaming fans to giant arenas - like The Palace of Auburn Hills.

"It will be kind of odd, we've

Palace of Auburn Hills.

"It will be kind of odd, we've only been on two other supporting tours, when we first started."

Those tours included Detroit's Sponge and Filter and came around the time the band



popular: Everclear is Craig Montoya (left), Art Alexakis and Gree Eklund. Catch them this weekend at the Palace of Auburn Matchbox

released its major label debut, the acclaimed Sparkle and Fade.

the acclaimed Sparkle and Fade.
"The only hard thing about touring is being away from your family," he said. "I just got divorced last year. I know its effects. That's the only part.
"Besides that touring is a blast. You get a very little sample of different places."

Check out Everclear opening for Matchbox Twenty, along with Lifchouse, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 3, The Palace of Auburn Hills, 1 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. Tickets cost \$24.50.\$34.50. Call (248) 645-6666.

Stephanie Angelyn Casola writes about popular music.Call her at (734) 953-2130

CD REVIEWS

Opening Time

The Push Stars

Opening Time
The Push Stars
Co-op Pop Records
The Boston trio that lent
Everything Shines to the smash
film There's Something About
Mary returns this month with a
follow-up to After The Party.
Proving that perhaps the party
has just begun, The Push Stars
offer Opening Time, a collection
of 13 contagiously catchy and
unmistakably heartfelt tunes
rooted in melodic guitar riffs and
story-like lyries.
Singer-songwriter Chris Traper, drummer Ryan Macmillan
and hassist/keyboardist Dan
McLoughlin performed Jan. 31
at Ferndale's Woodward Avenue
Browery to an. enthusiastic.
crowd of college co-eds, curious
music journalists and die-hard
fans. Since the band is contemplating a split from Capitol
Records, Opening Time. was
released independently this
month. Politics saide, the record
itself takes over where After The
Party left off. Here, we hear a
solid trio conveying the
heartache of past relationships,
a search for something meaningful and a way of looking at life
with your eyes wide-open in

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wonderment.

From the intriguing energy behind Waiting, Watching, Wondering to the scaled-down, intimacy of Trapper's voice on Lost Night's Dream, we hear The Push Stars at once yielding and clear. But it's the vivid story-telling of songs like Who We Are and Over You that give that relate-abilty and earns the band its faithful, evergrowing following.

ing.

Macmillan — who blushes
when asked what he thinks of
the new album — admits it's less
polished, but true to their sound.
And he's right. There are no surprises here, aside from maybe

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The Push Stars' music possess-

an equality that deserves to be heard by so many more. Opening Time seems appropriately titled. Look them up on the Web www. pushstars.

Instant Classic

The Dungbeatles

The Dungbeatles Magic Donkey Records While The Beatles manage to harbor the top selling album in the country once again, the Detroit area's own Dungbeatles, are climbing the ranks on their own. With the recent release of Instant Classic, The Dungbeatles meld melodies, drifting chord structures and tones befitting retro rock radio, the sound is

something you can't help but

something you can't help but enjoy.

With lyrics that tell a story and wind around your mind, The Dungbeatles show off a distinct talent for songwriting covering serious matters – Life Worth Giving – perfecting romantic ballads – Save a Place – and even showing a dark, comic sensibility – He's Got a Big Truck. The band is Jordy Bradley, Thad Bradley, Pete Peltier and Buddy Grell, The album comes complete with a black and white warning that advises "good tunes" are in store. With 14 catchy tracks, Instant Classic is an enjoyable music experience for anyone with a pop craving. Learn more at www.dungbeatles.com.



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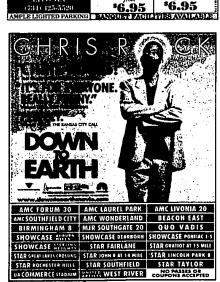
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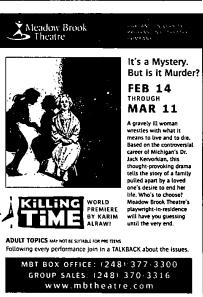
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