

CAKE



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Showroom of Compassion

Producer: *Cake*
Upbeat Records

Release Date:
Jan. 11

"I've wasted so much time," Cake's John McCrea laments on the band's sixth studio album

—and it's true we've had to wait a fair spell for some new music from the Sacramento, Calif., quartet. Fortunately "Showroom of Compassion" shows the interim since 2004's "Pressure Chief" was well-spent. The 11-track set, recorded at Cake's own solar-powered studio, finds the group at its most musically accomplished and quirkily ambitious, covering more ground on one album than some bands do in an entire career. The album hops in sequence from the proggy arrangement of "Easy to Crash" into the acoustic country/folk lope of "Bound Away" and then to the sweet-tempered, Beatles-flavored



"The Winter" with confident resolve. First single "Sick of You" slides a cheeky put-down—including a spoken-word middle—into a solid rock tune, while opener "Federal Funding" makes its socio-political point with a gritty guitar groove, a subtle synth line and a trancey ambience. "Mustache Man (Wasted)" brings the funk, "What's Now Is Now" delivers existential philosophy, and "Teenage Pregnancy" is an instrumental in which classical piano flows into bluesy grit. There's still nothing quite like Cake, and that makes "Showroom of Compassion" well worth the wait.—GG

