

TOP SINGLES

Mumford & Sons ★★★½ "Untitled"

This still-nameless ballad (fans are calling it "Home") sounds like Arcade Fire reborn as a string band. Cut live in a radio station, it's a slow-builder that threatens to explode but never does. It may be a taste of Mums' upcoming LP; either way, its sad hunger feels universal. **WILL HERMES**

Britney Spears feat. R. Kelly

★★★★½
"Till the World Ends [Remix]"

Kelly slithers in with no shame: Does he actually sing, "It's a party right here hosted by Mr. Sex Addiction"?! Not as fab as the Ke\$ha/Nicki Minaj remix (best use of chicken clucks this year!), but not as scene-stealing, either. He's a gentleman. **W.H.**

DJ Shadow feat. Afrikan Boy ★★ "I'm Excited"

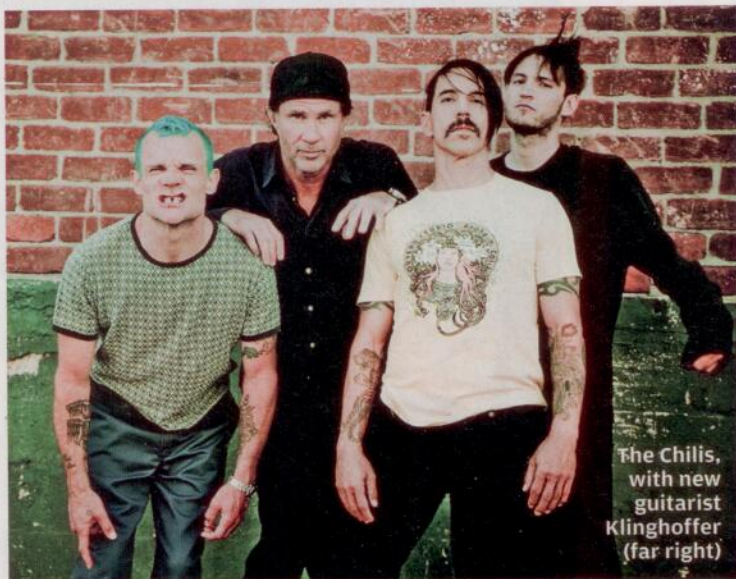
Shadow's music used to be touched by the uncanny; this may be the clunkiest thing he's done. Stray, seemingly found noises give the groove ridges, but it's so busy it never finds its footing. **MICHAELANGELO MATOS**

Cobra Starship

★★★★½
"You Make Me Feel..."

Except for a riff that suggests Pink's "Raise Your Glass," guitars take a timeout from the pop pranksters' new one. Gabe Saporta drops weak pickup lines, but guest diva Sabi calls herself "the baddest baby in the atmosphere," and is right. **MONICA HERRERA**

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The Chilis, with new guitarist Klinghoffer (far right)

Chili Peppers Restart the Groove Machine

Red Hot Chili Peppers ★★★
"The Adventures of Rain Dance Maggie"

It's reassuring to realize just how little the Chilis have changed in the five years since their last album - or in the two decades since *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*, for that matter. So what if guitarist John Frusciante quit (again) during their most recent hiatus? The remaining members seem to be the same lovable goofballs as always. Their big comeback single, from August 30th's *I'm With You*,

has everything you want from the Chilis: Flea and Chad Smith cook up a juicy funk-pop groove with plenty of cowbell, new guitarist Josh Klinghoffer kicks in some rangy riffs, and Anthony Kiedis woos a wild child with the type of come-ons only he can deliver with a straight face ("Ticktock, I want to rock you like the Eighties") before leaning into a huge, pleading hook. Welcome back, dudes. **SIMON VOZICK-LEVINSON**

White Stripes Open Vaults

The White Stripes

"Signed D.C." ★★★
"I've Been Loving You Too Long" ★★★★★½

Jack and Meg have called it quits, but there's good news: Third Man Records plans to gradually roll out a load of unreleased White Stripes songs. The newest offerings - covers cut in 1997 - prove the Stripes sounded like themselves from the get-go: On Love's druggy ballad "Signed D.C.," Jack moans about addiction over a beat that's minimalist even for Meg. Their take on Otis Redding's "I've Been Loving You Too Long" is livelier: Jack's vocals are sweet, but his fuzzed-out guitar suggests deeper torment. More, please. **PATRICK DOYLE**

Common Punches Back

Common feat. Nas

"Ghetto Dreams" ★★★★★½

Rap-ignorant pundits should defame Common more often, if it'll result in songs like this. The Chicago native's latest knocks harder than anything on his last album, thanks to leering No I.D. production that samples pre-funk George Clinton (the Parliaments' "Let's Make It Last"). The song's around-the-way woman-worship ("Baby in one arm; the other is a skillet") echoes that of "Fried Chicken" by Nas, who raps somewhat reluctantly about "dimes" while touting his newly single status: "African queen - yo, look at me, I'm a bachelor!" Sean Hannity, get to misappropriating. **M.H.**

BOOTLEG

Eddie Vedder
Lyric Theater
Brisbane, Australia
March 10th, 2011

When Vedder came to Australia in March, his solo album, *Ukulele Songs*, was more than two months away from hitting shelves. Rather than flood the audience with material it didn't recognize, Vedder chose to fill the set with Pearl Jam deep cuts - and a stunning amount of covers. The show opens with a beautiful version of Daniel Johnston's "Walking the Cow" before going into Cat Stevens' "Trouble," which Vedder flubs about halfway through. "Sometimes when you really feel the songs - that's when you fuck them up," he tells the crowd. Vedder tacks the first verse of Pink Floyd's "Brain



Vedder

Damage" onto a run-through of the Pearl Jam single "I Am Mine," while "Porch" has the Aussies screaming along. But the best moment comes when Vedder honors two of his rock heroes, with careful renditions of Bruce Springsteen's "Open All Night" and Neil Young's "The Needle and the Damage Done." Much like those two guys, Vedder is equally effective when he's fronting a noisy rock band or standing by himself with an acoustic guitar. **ANDY GREENE**