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spotlight



Flea, left, Chad Smith, Anthony Kiedis and Josh Klinghoffer by Ellen Von Unwerth

Fresh Chili Peppers spice it up with 'You' after 5-year break

Red Hot Chili Peppers

I'm With You

★★★½ FUNK-ROCK

Twenty-eight years after launching in Los Angeles, these frisky, freewheeling rock-funksters sound fresh, friendlier and less punky on their 10th studio album.

Part of that is probably the extra time spent writing during the five-year breather the members took after sending 2006's *Stadium Arcadium* into the multiplatinum stratosphere. And partly it's the injection of new blood in the form of guitarist/keyboardist/vocalist Josh Klinghoffer, who in 2009 replaced longtime guitarist and key writer John Frusciante.

Klinghoffer gets a few brief solos, but mostly his work is integrated into the

polished pop-tinged group sound crafted by longtime producer Rick Rubin. Bassist Flea and especially vocalist Anthony Kiedis shine brightest on this material, which is eminently danceable, propulsive, slinky and engaging.

Elements of hip-hop, disco and psychedelia add spice, but mostly this is melodic Stones-ian rock that takes occasional dark and cynical lyric detours into the perils of excess and celebrity. There's a breakup song, *Meet Me at the Corner*, that's pretty but pretty wimpy; it's more rewarding just to follow the *Dance, Dance, Dance* mantra of the album's closer. — Jerry Shriver

>>>Download: *Monarchy of Roses*, *Did I Let You Know*, *The Adventures of Rain Dance Maggie*, *Brendan's Death Song*, *Happiness Loves Company*