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CINEMAN MUSIC FOR 28-OCT-2005

MINI MUSIC REVIEWS AS OF MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2005

By Steven Israel

Billy Joe Shaver - "The Real Deal" (Compadre):

His wife and mother died of cancer within one month of each other. Then Billy Joe Shaver recorded an album with his guitarist son Eddy that chronicled their death. Before that was released, Eddy Shaver died from a drug overdose. Seven months later, while Billy Joe Shaver was performing, he suffered a heart attack on stage. So what's Shaver do on his terrific new album, "The Real Deal?" Stare death in the face and sing in a big, bold voice: "I'm gonna live forever/I'm gonna cross that river/I'm gonna catch tomorrow now." And he sings it with a couple of the guest musicians who grace this album, Big and Rich. They're quality musicians like Nancie Griffith and Flaco Jimenez who reflect the reputation of the man who's written classic tunes like "Restless Wind" for folks like Waylon Jennings, Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan. This is rich music with spare backing that frames Shaver's deep Texas twang. It's music that focuses on faith, aging and the poetic truth of lines like "It just ain't there for me no more/Not the way it was before/It's like a wall without a door/It just ain't there for me no more."

Brimstone Butterfly - "Normality Killed the Cat" (Silverline):

Think T Rex meets the Raveonettes when you think of the perky pop punk group from Denmark, Brimstone Butterfly. Their new album, "Normality Killed the Cat, their first in America, is fun stuff. It's chock full of killer musical and lyrical hooks that the quintet plays for all they're worth. But what gives the music its edge is its slashing guitars and cynical, image-filled lyrics, like "...what happened to your/Lust for life and to your/Blue eyes in the endless nights/To your pep talking/Ground shaking breathtaking fascination..." These guys sure haven't lost their lust for life. Their knack of combining that energy with smarts is what makes Brimstone Butterfly a band to watch - and hear.

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