

Overzicht van CD's gekocht in 2007.

Not Too Late - Norah Jones

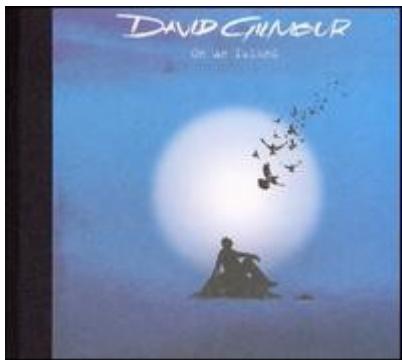
Recoils from fame usually aren't as subdued as Norah Jones' third album, *Not Too Late*, but such understatement is customary for this gentlest of singer-songwriters. *Not Too Late* may not be as barbed or alienating as either *In Utero* or *Kid A* — it's not an ornery intensification of her sound nor a chilly exploration of its furthest limits — but make no mistake, it is indeed a conscious abdication of her position as a comfortable coffeehouse crooner and a move toward art for art's sake.



And, frankly, who can blame Jones for wanting to shake off the Starbucks stigmata? Although a large part of her appeal has always been that she sounds familiar, like a forgotten favorite from the early '70s, Jones is too young and too much of a New York bohemian to settle into a role as a nostalgia peddler, so it made sense that she started to stretch a little after her 2004 sophomore set, *Feels Like Home*, proved that her surprise blockbuster 2002 debut, *Come Away with Me*, was no fluke. First, there was the cabaret country of her *Little Willies* side band, then there was her appearance on gonzo art rocker Mike Patton's Peeping Tom project, and finally there's this hushed record, her first containing nothing but original compositions. It's also her first album recorded without legendary producer Arif Mardin, who helmed her first two albums, giving them a warm, burnished feel that was nearly as pivotal to Jones' success as her sweet, languid voice. Mardin died in the summer of 2006, and in his absence, Jones recorded *Not Too Late* at the home studio she shares with her collaborator, bassist and boyfriend Lee Alexander. Although it shares many of the same sonic characteristics as Jones' first two albums, *Not Too Late* boasts many subtle differences that add up to a distinctly different aesthetic. Jones and Alexander have stripped Norah's music to its core. Gone are any covers of pop standards, gone are the studio pros, gone is the enveloping lushness that made *Come Away with Me* so easy to embrace, something that *Not Too Late* is most decidedly not. While this might not have the rough edges of a four-track demo, *Not Too Late* is most certainly music that was made at home with little or no consideration of an audience much larger than Jones and Alexander. It's spare, sometimes skeletal, often sleepy and lackadaisical, wandering from tunes plucked out on acoustic guitars and pianos to those with richer full-band arrangements. Norah Jones has never exactly been lively — part of her charm was her sultry slowness, ideal for both Sunday afternoons and late nights — but the atmosphere here is stultifying even if it's not exactly unpleasant. After all, unpleasantness seems to run contrary to Jones' nature, and even if she dabbles in Tom Waits-ian carnivalesque stomps ("Sinkin' Soon") or tentatively stabs at politics ("My Dear Country"), it never feels out of place; often, the shift is so subtle that it's hard to notice. That subtlety is the biggest Achilles' heel on *Not Too Late*, as it manifests itself in songs that aren't particularly distinctive or performances that are particularly varied. There are exceptions to the rule and they all arrive with full-band arrangements, whether it's the lazy jazz shuffle of "Until the End," the country-tinged "Be My Somebody," or the wonderful laid-back soul of "Thinking About You." These are songs that not only sound full but they sound complete,

songs that have a purposeful flow and are memorable for both their melody and sentiment. They would have been standouts on *Feels Like Home*, but here they are even more distinctive because the rest of the record plays like a sketchbook, capturing Jones and Alexander figuring out how to move forward after such great success. Instead of being the end result of those experiments, the completed painting after the sketch, *Not Too Late* captures their process, which is interesting if not quite compelling. But its very release is a clear statement of artistic purpose for Jones: its ragged, unfinished nature illustrates that she's more interested in pursuing her art than recycling *Come Away with Me*, and if this third album isn't as satisfying as that debut, it nevertheless is a welcome transitional effort that proves her artistic heart is in the right place.

On an Island - David Gilmour

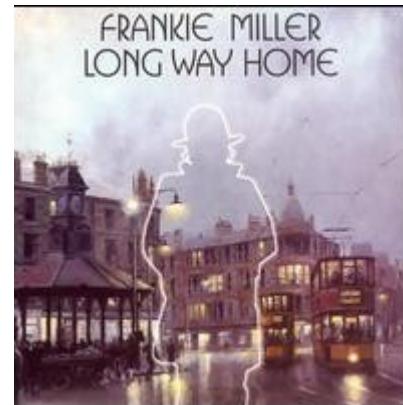


To think that David Gilmour waited 22 years to record his third solo album is a pretty solid indicator that he's not the kind of bloke to merely cash in on his name. After all, he's the guy who sold his house for four million English pounds and gave the money to charity. Perhaps now that the *Pink Floyd* reunion happened and he and Roger Waters are at least civil to one another, the *Floyd* enigma can finally find its way into the annals of history and rock legend. Of course, this brings listeners to *On an Island*. Those wanting something edgy and dramatic will have to wait. Some of the more misanthropic *Floyd* heads (and there are many) will give voice to their ire that he's written six of these ten tunes with his wife, *Polly Samson*, who also plays a bit of piano and sings here. You can hear them now — "She's the new *Yoko Ono*!" — at which point the pair will rightfully smile, quietly and bemusedly. Musically, *On an Island* is mostly a laid-back, utterly elegant English record. It has the feel of taking place between twilight and dawn. There are a few rumblers here to upset the balance of tranquility and stillness, like flashes of heat lightning across the dark skies, but they only add dimension to these proceedings. Produced by Gilmour, *Phil Manzanera* (who appears on keyboards a lot), and *Chris Thomas*, the album features guest spots from the likes of *Richard Wright*, *Robert Wyatt*, *B.J. Cole*, *Floyd/Sly Stone* drummer *Andy Newmark*, *Georgie Fame*, *David Crosby* and *Graham Nash*, *Jools Holland*, *Willie Wilson*, and many others.

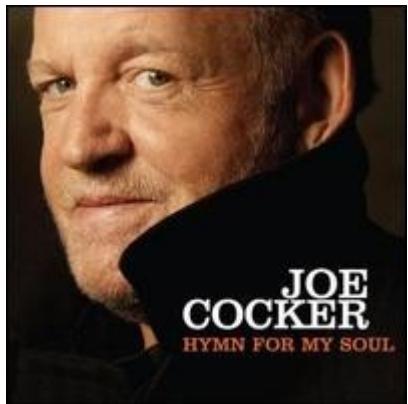
The set opens with "Castellorizon," a moody showcase with Gilmour's guitars backed by the orchestral arrangements of *Zbigniew Preisner* as conducted by *Robert Zeigler*. Preisner's arrangements throughout are wonderful and not quite as dark as one might expect, given his track record. Atmospheric and dramatic, it offers a lovely if off impression of the album. The title track, which follows, is all breezy strummed chords, keyboards by *Wright*, and dreamy vocals with Gilmour backed by *Crosby* and *Nash*. It's a slow, textured, and spacy love song. "The Blue" follows suit; it too is so utterly full of air that one can hear the wind rustling through the palms. *Wright*'s backing vocals lend a slight PF "Echoes" slant (as does the Hammond organ); the instrumentation just shimmers, hovers, and floats the track along. There are rockers here, though — "Take a Breath" features chunky razor-wire chords, *Leszek Mozdzer*'s piano, and *Manzanera*'s synth work winding around one another, and the mood is wonderfully plodding, dramatic, and futuristically "heavy." On the gauzy wee-hours instrumental "Red Sky at Night,"

Gilmour plays sax as well as guitars, and it gives way to "This Heaven," a bluesy stroller that's given deluxe organ treatment by [Fame](#). There's a delightfully nocturnal feel that makes the track feel a bit sinister, but really it's the sound of eros making itself heard, and Gilmour contributes a biting solo and fills amid the drum samples and strings. [Wyatt](#) appears on the back-porch spacehead soundtrack-like tripnotica of "Then I Close My Eyes." His and Gilmour's wordless voices slip under and around the considerable space between instruments – which include [Wyatt](#) on cornet and percussion as well as [Cole](#) playing a Weissenborn guitar, [Caroline Dale](#)'s cello, a pair of harmonicas, and of course Gilmour's high-register blues twang. The set ends on a gentle note in "Where We Start" – so much so that it may make some scratch their heads and wonder where the cranky, diffident Gilmour has wandered off to, but others will be drawn into this seductive, romantic new place where musical subtlety, spacious textures, and quietly lyrical optimism hold sway.

Long Way Home – Frankie Miller



Hymn For My Soul – Joe Cocker



The very title of Joe Cocker's *Hymn for My Soul* suggests that this, his 2007 studio album, is a gospel affair, or at least something inspired by faith – something that isn't true to the letter, yet there is something true about the spirit of this sentiment, for these are songs that serve as a tonic to Cocker's soul. He's pulled songs from several familiar sources – [Stevie Wonder](#), [George Harrison](#), [Bob Dylan](#) – and found other newer songs that share a similar sentiment, offering reassuring thoughts in troubled times. While nobody could ever claim that this album – produced by [Ethan Johns](#), son of [Glyn](#) – has any grit, it nevertheless is warmer than recent

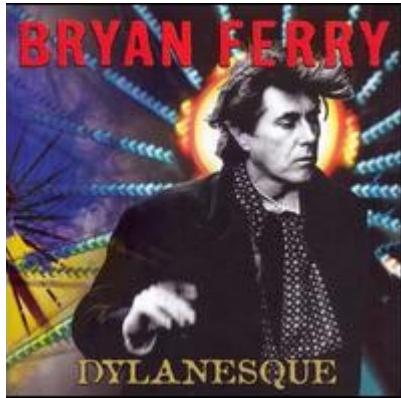
Cocker discs, boasting a soulful heart (even if it has been polished and cleaned until it sparkles). If this isn't enough to bring long-straying Cocker fans back into the fold, it nevertheless is his best record in recent memory, and will satisfy those who have been looking for nothing more than a good, solid album from him, which this surely is.

The Look Of Love – Trijntje Oosterhuis

Burt Bacharach songbook



Dylanesque – Bryan Ferry



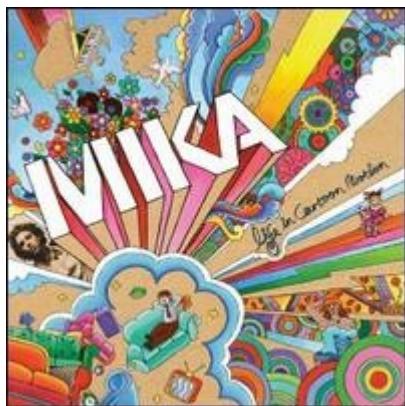
The greatest – indeed, only – irony of Bryan Ferry's 2007 album-long tribute to the Bard is that *Dylanesque* never sounds "Dylanesque." There are no solo acoustic guitars, no swirling organs, no thin wild mercury music, nothing that suggests any of the sounds typically associated with [Bob Dylan](#). No, *Dylanesque* sounds Ferry-esque: careful, precise, elegant, so casually sophisticated it sometimes borders on the drowsy. There are no new wrinkles, then, apart from a small but crucial one – unlike his other records, this was recorded quickly, over the course of a week with his

touring band in tow. This does give *Dylanesque* a comparatively loose, off-the-cuff feel, which is a bit of a welcome relief after several decades of cautious, deliberate conceptual albums, and gives the album its understated charm. Since Ferry never radically reinvents the songs – apart from the sleek, sly propulsion of "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues" and a spare, haunting piano-and-strings version of "Positively Fourth Street" – this is an album where all the pleasures lay in the subtleties, whether it's how Ferry phrases his delivery, how his road band feels supple yet muscular, how [Eno](#) electronically enhances a few tracks or how [Robin Trower](#) tears into "All Along the Watchtower." These are the details to savor upon repeated listens, but upon that first spin it's immediately apparent that the Ferry who made *Dylanesque* is an assured, relaxed vocalist who isn't sweating the specifics, he's simply singing songs with a band that offers sympathetic support. They may not push him, the way that [Roxy](#) did in its prime, nor does this have the meticulous ambition of his original work, but again, that's the charm of this album: Ferry has never felt quite so comfortable as he does here, and if that may not be exactly what all listeners are looking for when they listen to his work, this is the quality that will make *Dylanesque* a small understated gem for certain segments of his die-hard fans.

Pictures – Katie Melua



Life in Cartoon Motion – Mika



Mika's vivid, aptly named debut album, *Life in Cartoon Motion*, borrows and builds on the glittery, glamorous, and not-so-secretly sentimental musical territory carved out by Elton John and Freddie Mercury, or more recently, Rufus Wainwright and the Scissor Sisters. Fortunately, his name-dropping, shape-shifting pop is usually good, and genuine, enough to come across as eloquent homage rather than blatant thievery or a tired rehash. Mika's singles are his most charming moments, especially the instant sunshine of "Grace Kelly," which crams tap-dancing rhythms, filmic dialogue, Elton's pianos, Freddie's vocal harmonies, and

Brian May's guitars into just over three minutes. "Relax (Take It Easy)" is in the same vein of hypnotic, danceable melancholy as the Scissor Sisters' reworking of "Comfortably Numb," albeit less showy, while "Billy Brown"s brass arrangement, flowing melody, and soft-shoe rhythms give it the feel of an unusually witty show tune about pre-life crises and living in the closet. As *Life in Cartoon Motion* unfolds, it reveals more of Mika's musical identity, both for better and worse. His classical piano training gives the album an appealing fluidity, especially on "Any Other World," and lilting, Afro-pop-inspired guitars and harmonies pop up here and there, most effectively on "Big Girl (You Are Beautiful)." However, while *Life in Cartoon Motion* has lots of enthusiasm and creativity, it doesn't have a lot of nuance. On songs like "Lollipop" and "Love Today," Mika straddles the line between adorable and annoying. And as the overly long, overwrought "Erase" shows, he also doesn't have quite the masterful touch with gentler songs that his influences possess. As admirable as *Life in Cartoon Motion*'s eclecticism is, it could use more focus — something that songs like the jaunty breakup song "Stuck in the Middle" and angry rocker "Ring Ring" suggest Mika is developing. While more restraint could've taken the album from good to great, its Technicolor, everything-at-once, borderline overdone feel makes it a fitting portrait of Mika as a young artist.

Taking Chances – Celine Dion

In 2003, Celine Dion began a long-term engagement with Caesars Palace, performing a show based on her 2002 album, *A New Day Has Come*, at the Las Vegas casino five nights a week. The Vegas show was such a success that the powers that be wound up extending its run, eventually closing the production at the end of 2007, over a year later than originally planned. During these long five years, Dion trickled out some new releases — there was a new collection called *One Heart* that hit the stores the day the whole Sin City affair started, as well as a few French-language albums, a document of the live show, and a soundtrack to Anne Geddes baby photographs — but she never did a full-fledged, big-screen sequel to *A New Day Has Come*. She was saving that for when the Vegas extravaganza wrapped up, and as soon as it was ready to close, Dion was ready with *Taking Chances*, her first "official" pop album in five years.

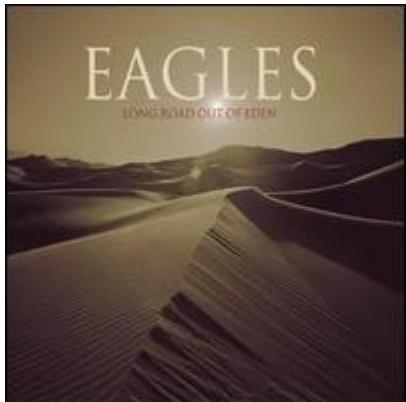


Never one for subtlety, Celine Dion hammers home that her post-Vegas years are going to be different with the very title of *Taking Chances*, but she doesn't stop there. Not only is this the time for her to take chances, she's also full of surprises and there's a new day dawning. She sings that "just when you thought you got me figured out," she'll do something unexpected because she's a "chameleon" — basically, any rebirth cliché that comes to mind pops up somewhere on *Taking Chances*, as Celine never lets listeners forget that she is beginning the next grand chapter of her career. In the pre-release push for the album, it was suggested that Dion was, well, taking chances with her music, and her enlisting of *Evanescence*'s Ben Moody to produce and write a couple of tracks, while hiring Linda Perry to write another couple, suggested that this would indeed be a different kind of Celine album. And it is, at least a little bit. Over its long, long 16 tracks, Celine indulges in some glossy electronic beats on "Shadow of Love," flirts with hard rock on the Aldo Nova-written "Can't Fight the Feelin'" (the great Canadian AOR rocker writes three other tunes here, including "A Song for You," which borrows a title from Leon Russell but nothing else), tries to shimmy like Shakira on "Eyes on Me," and even tries to belt out the blues on "That's Just the Woman in Me," written by former Soft Boy Kimberley Rew.

Added to this are the understated but no less significant efforts to hitch her wagon to the numerous *American Idols* who imitate her style. Celine attempts to snatch Heart's "Alone" from Carrie Underwood and cribs from Kelly Clarkson's operatic rock, two blatant thievery that, when combined with the quartet of explicit changeups, gives *Taking Chances* a vaguely desperate vibe, as if Celine needs to prove that she still reigns supreme among all divas. Although Dion can pull off these moves with strenuous skill, all the effort is for naught because these slight changes in sound wind up serving an album that doesn't feel that different than the same old Celine Dion. The album may not be as big and spangly as *A New Day Has Come* — whose glittery surfaces and exaggerated arrangements were ideal for the Vegas chapter of Dion's career — but it does play as a refurbished version of her 1996 blockbuster, *Falling into You*, overhauled for a new millennium. It lacks both the epic Jim Steinman songs and the Diane Warren ballads, yet their imprint remains, as their over the top formula is given a brushed aluminum finish — a sleek, chilly, tasteful sound that fits the mood of the late 2000s. And if *Taking Chances* is

anything, it's an album of its time: it offers extravagance in the guise of self-help, which can be alluring in doses – especially those bizarre blues-rockers – but it's just too much of a very expensive yet not particularly tasteful thing.

Long Road Out of Eden – Eagles



Just because it took them 13 years to deliver a studio sequel to their 1994 live album *Hell Freezes Over*, don't say it took the Eagles a long time to cash in on their reunion. They started cashing in almost immediately, driving up ticket prices into the stratosphere as they played gigs on a semi-regular basis well into the new millennium. So, why did it take them so long to record a new studio album? It could be down to the band's notoriously testy relations – [Don Felder](#) did leave and sue the band in the interim, settling out of court in 2007 – it could be that they were

running out some contractual clause somewhere, it could be that they were waiting for the money to be right, or the music to be right. It doesn't really matter: there was no pressing need for a new album. Fans were satisfied by the oldies, and the band kept raking in the dough, so they could take their time making a new album. And did they ever take their time – the 13-year gap between *Hell Freezes Over* and *Long Road Out of Eden*, their first album since 1979's *The Long Run*, was nearly as long as that between their 1980 breakup and 1994 reunion. Far from indulging in a saturation campaign for this long-awaited record, the Eagles released the double-disc *Long Road Out of Eden* with surgical precision, indulging in few interviews and bypassing conventional retail outlets in favor of an exclusive release with Wal-Mart, which is not only the biggest retailer in America but also where a good chunk of the band's contemporary audience – equal parts aging classic rockers and country listeners – shops. (The album was also available on the group's official website, eaglesband.com, via musictoday.com.)

It was a savvy move to release *Long Road Out of Eden* as a Wal-Mart exclusive, but the album is savvier still, crafted to evoke the spirit and feel of the Eagles' biggest hits. Nearly every one of their classic rock radio staples has a doppelgänger here, as the [J.D. Souther](#)-written "How Long" recalls "Take It Easy," the stiff funk of "Frail Grasp on the Big Picture" echoes back to the clenched riffs of "Life in the Fast Lane," and while perhaps these aren't exact replicas, there's no denying it's possible to hear echoes of everything from "Lynin' Eyes" and "Desperado" to "Life in the Fast Lane," and [Timothy B. Schmit](#) turns [Paul Carrack](#)'s "I Don't Want to Hear Anymore" into a soft rock gem to stand alongside his own "I Can't Tell You Why." It's all calculated, all designed to hearken back to their past and keep the customer satisfied, but yet it often manages to avoid sounding crass, as the songs are usually strong and the sound is right, capturing the group's peaceful, easy harmonies and [Joe Walsh](#)'s guitar growl in equal measure. The Eagles burrow so deeply into their classic sound that they sound utterly disconnected from modern times, no matter how hard [Don Henley](#) strives to say something, anything about the wretched state of the world on "Long Road Out of Eden," "Frail Grasp on the Big Picture," and "Business as Usual." These tunes are riddled with 21st century imagery, but sonically they play as companions to [Henley](#)'s brooding end-of-the-'80s hit *The End of the Innocence*, both in their heavy-handed sobriety and

deliberate pace and their big-budget production. That trio fits neatly into the second disc of *Long Road Out of Eden*, which generally feels stuck in the late '80s, as [Walsh](#) spends seven minutes grooving on "Last Good Time in Town" as if he were a Southwestern [Jimmy Buffett](#) with a worldbeat penchant, [Glenn Frey](#) sings [Jack Tempchin](#) and [John Brannen](#)'s "Somebody" as if it were a sedated, cheerful "Smuggler's Blues," and the whole thing feels polished with outdated synthesizers.

None of this is necessarily bad, however, as it's all executed well and the doggedly out-of-fashion sonics only make the songs *more* reminiscent of the Eagles' older records, especially if their solo work from the '80s is part of the equation. If that second disc does seem a bit like the Eagles' lost album from the Reagan years, the first disc recalls their mellow country-rock records of the '70s — that is, if [Joe Walsh](#) had been around to sing [Frankie Miller](#)'s blues-rocker "Guilty of the Crime" to balance out [Henley](#) and [Frey](#)'s "Busy Being Fabulous" and "What Do I Do with My Heart," a counterpoint that serves the band well. That first disc is the stronger of the two, but the two discs do fit together well, as they wind up touching upon all of the band's different eras, from the early days to their solo hits. It's designed to please those fans who have been happy to hear the same songs over and over again, whether it's on the radio or in those pricey concerts — listeners who want new songs that feel old, but not stale. That's precisely what *Long Road Out of Eden* provides, as it's an album meticulously crafted to fit within the band's legacy without tarnishing it.

Call Me Irresponsible – Michael Bublé

More than any of his contemporaries, vocalist Michael Bublé has bridged the gap between standards-oriented vocal pop and more contemporary pop vocals. Having perfected the mix on his superb 2003 effort, *It's Time*, which found the Frank Sinatra-influenced singer covering both "I've Got You Under My Skin" and [Leon Russell](#)'s R&B ballad "Song for You," Bublé wisely doesn't mess with a good thing on 2007's *Call Me Irresponsible*. Once again delving into a mix of swinging big-band numbers and classic pop hits such as the wickedly hip '60s standard "Comin' Home Baby" (featuring backing vocals from [Boyz II Men](#)), the album is a breezy, stylish good time. And while such cuts as "The Best Is Yet to Come" and the laid-back title track comfortably cast Bublé as a modern-day crooner consistent with his billing, the unexpected reworkings of contemporary pop songs often make the biggest impact. To these ends, his bossa nova duet with vocalist [Ivan Lins](#) on Eric Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight" and the reharmonized [Willie Nelson](#) perennial "Always on My Mind" work particularly well here, not as cheeky cabaret but as artfully crafted and devastatingly moving ballads. And it's not just the cover tunes that drive the album; on the contrary, much like the Bublé co-written ballad "Home" defined the mood of *It's Time*, his sparkling melodic pop original "Everything" helps make *Call Me Irresponsible* a truly welcome pop album by any standard.



Platinum Collection – I Muvrini

Paul Stanley – Kiss

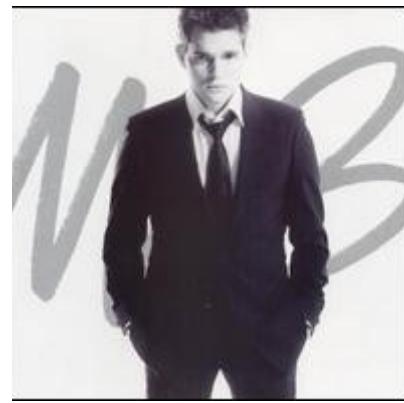
Paul Stanley's 1978 solo album was the most Kiss-like of the four, sounding more like an official band release rather than a solo outing. But this isn't necessarily a bad thing — Stanley had become a seasoned hard rock songwriter by this point, churning out some of Kiss' best material ("Love Gun," "Detroit Rock City," "I Want You," etc.), and wisely stuck to his winning formula on *Paul Stanley*. With the help of studio musicians, as well as guitarist Bob Kulick (who was almost an original member of Kiss, and brother of future Kiss replacement guitarist Bruce) and Rod Stewart/Vanilla Fudge drummer Carmine Appice, Stanley's album is on par with Ace Frehley's as far as consistency is concerned. A couple of epic compositions (by Kiss standards) are highlights — "Tonight You Belong to Me" and "Take Me Away (Together as One)" — as are the more straightforward tracks "Ain't Quite Right," "Wouldn't You Like to Know Me?," "It's Alright," and "Goodbye." While his other Kiss bandmates took more chances with their solo records (with varying results), Stanley's album is more or less what a new Kiss album released in 1978 would have sounded like.



Who'll speak for love – Trijntje Oosterhuis

It's time – Michael Bublé

Although it took more than a year of concerts and promotional appearances, Michael Bublé's 2003 debut disc of swinging pop standards finally ascended the Billboard album chart and landed at number 47. That peak may not seem impressive at first, but in a musical world dominated by rap or the latest flavor of alternative rock, Bublé's upper chart appearance was a real accomplishment and it sparked a renewed interest in music associated with great vocalists like Frank Sinatra. With his second studio disc, *It's Time*, Bublé builds upon the musical foundation he laid with his debut and demonstrates that he is much more than a flavor-of-the-month celebrity. Like his debut, *It's Time* mines the rich history of pop music as Bublé applies his own technique to classic standards and incorporates his Rat Pack sound into modern pop songs. Other pop vocal giants have made attempts to reinterpret the pop songs of their day with appalling results (Mel Tormé's version of "Sunshine Superman" comes to mind), but Bublé has the knack for selecting the right songs that he can properly transform into edible works that avoid a cheesy aftertaste. Having a standard like "A Foggy Day (In London Town)" share space with the Beatles' "Can't Buy Me Love" may seem like a lounge lizard joke waiting to happen, but the arrangements (most courtesy of producer David Foster) and performances are seamless. Therefore, the quiet groove of "I've Got You Under My Skin" can sit comfortable next to Bublé's smoky version of Leon Russell's "Song for You," featuring Chris Botti on trumpet. Perhaps it is due to this formula working so well that Bublé has incorporated more of his unique takes on modern pop than on his debut. He even ventures into



R&B territory with older hits like "Try a Little Tenderness" and "How Sweet It Is," all the while giving these songs a retro freshness that breathes new life into these gems. Pop starlet [Nelly Furtado](#) sounds lovely and elegant in the duet "Quando, Quando, Quando," while Bublé ends the disc with a beautiful reading of [Stevie Wonder's](#) "You and I." Another positive step forward is the inclusion of the lovely original tune "Home," a somewhat autobiographical "too long on the road" song co-written by Bublé. The success of this ballad provides yet another direction that he can explore and expand upon. Throughout the disc Bublé emits the feeling that he loves these songs and truly enjoys what he is doing. He sounds pure of voice and pure of heart. Those are rare commodities in the recorded world and they, along with Bublé's talent and vision, help to make *It's Time* a wonderful listening experience.

Michael Bublé – Michael Bublé



Unlike most young guys who gravitate towards the latest rock or rap trend, Michael Bublé chose to study the classic works of pop vocal masters like [Ella Fitzgerald](#) and [Frank Sinatra](#) while slowly developing his own technique and career as a vocal interpreter. Thanks to producer [David Foster](#), the 25-year-old Bublé has graduated to the big time with a self-titled debut disc that shows off his knowledge and appreciation for a style of music that is mostly unfamiliar to his generation. Swinging his way through a set of pop standards both classic ("The Way You Look Tonight"),

and more recent ("Moondance"), Bublé already possesses a quality that reaches beyond his youthfulness, with a voice that incorporates his influences into a sound that is fresh yet familiar. When he launches into a standard like "Come Fly With Me," images of [Sinatra](#) are conjured up; but as the song progresses, the listener realizes that this is not [Sinatra](#), or [Bobby Darin](#), or any other famous vocalist. It is someone who has learned the art of popular song and is creating his own colorful music from shades of the past. In doing so, Bublé throws a fresh coat of paint on an old standard like "Fever," and gives it a satiny sheen that the song hasn't seen in years. In addition to revitalizing the classics, he draws in a younger audience by covering more recent, rock-era songs in a swinging gloss. Songs like [George Michael's](#) "Kissing a Fool" or [Queen's](#) "Crazy Little Thing Called Love" are jazzed up even further than their retro-based originals, and flow easily alongside the standards. The only interruption comes when [Barry Gibb](#) guests on his own "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart," with a reverb-laced vibrato that simply does not fit in this musical environment. Throughout the disc it is apparent that Bublé has done his homework and aced the test, but there is always room for improvement. [Sinatra](#) haunts his vocals a bit too much on songs like "Summer Wind," and there are moments throughout the disc when he forces his technique instead of following a natural cadence, but these minor criticisms will improve with time; and nothing can really diminish the sheer pleasure and joy he expresses in each performance. He sounds absolutely thrilled to be singing these songs, and that goes a long way in making *Michael Bublé* an exciting debut.

Aan Tafel met de Mooiste Sfeermuziek – Various Artists

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