



OILERS HOCKEY

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SAT, 21 NOV 2009
BLACKHAWKS VS. OILERS
8:00 PM

BLACK DOG



Pitbull
Rebution
Sony Music

albumbattle

VS.

Sean Kingston
Tomorrow
Sony Music



JANNA YING DENG
Arts & Entertainment Staff

The plan: pick two albums and pit them against each other in a gruesome deathmatch until a victor emerges. There can be only one!

Cover Art

Pitbull: Pitbull is yet another James Bond hopeful, complete with an airbrushed naked chick in camouflage at his side. Listeners don't need help figuring out this CD is full of trashy dance hits.

Kingston: An animated Kingston doll complete with bling and aviators — juvie record sold separately. It's almost adorable.

Advantage: Kingston, for avoiding the "hot naked girl" cliché.

Best Track

Pitbull: The lyrics actually tell a story in "Across the World." For a moment, you believe Pitbull has purpose as an artist.

Kingston: His track "Welcome to Tomorrow" sounds uplifting, hopeful, and enduring, until it ends after 50 seconds and you realize it's just an intro to title track "Tomorrow," which features

Kingston whining over a girl.

Advantage: Pitbull for daring to giving us a whole song that didn't involve female anatomy.

Worst Song

Pitbull: So many choices, but "Girls" has a total word count of 10, and describes what I assume to be one of Pitbull's anatomically impossible adolescent fantasies. Not interesting unless you share his imagination. Gross.

Kingston: Whatever "Ice Cream Girl" means, it will leave you feeling cold and sick if you have to listen to it repeatedly.

Advantage: I really don't think it's possible to win this one. But Kingston gets the point; perhaps not everyone is lactose intolerant the first time they hear his song.

Best Dance Song

Pitbull: Despite its lyrics, "Krazy" is catchy and rhythmic. Most people will be too drunk to understand the words anyway.

Kingston: The infamous "Fire Burning" still reigns. The lyrics are easy enough to remember, and shouting "somebody call 911!" just gets better as the evening

lengthens (as long as the tequila shots keep coming).

Advantage: Pitbull, just because the Kingston single should be burned out by now.

Album Title

Pitbull: Is *Rebution* a political statement? An indication of change from the norm? It hints at intrigue without melodrama.

Kingston: *Tomorrow* — an optimistic statement about the future or are we overstretching its meaning? Perhaps it just refers to the title track.

Advantage: Pitbull, just for cute wordsmithing.

Verdict

Neither album can be considered groundbreaking. They both fulfill the niche of inebriated dance music, and expectations aren't high for this genre. Pitbull wins by a hair. His songs are more diverse, if not better. Kingston is more brave, leaving his rap artist role, but not brave enough think of lyrics to match his hip-hop reggae sound. Despite Pitbull's win, few would complain if both these dawgs were euthanized.

FLOP CULTURE

For anyone that knows me, they know one thing: I quite fancy Nicolas Cage. His brazenly over-the-top overacting is like the sun on a rainy day for me; his propensity for yelling manically inane lines fills my heart with glee; and his sole facial expression — you know, the one of wild-eyed insanity and abject fear — makes me feel truly alive due to the hearty belly laughs.

So it was with true sorrow and pity that I read this week that Cage's own *National Treasure* had gone missing, and the likelihood that a message on the back of the Declaration of Independence would magically help him locate it was slim to nil. In debt to the IRS to the tune of \$6 million, Cage was forced to auction off his two New

Orleans homes last Thursday, including one in the historic French Quarter.

Man, this Oscar-award-winning A-lister nephew of Francis Ford Coppola who routinely makes lists of Hollywood's most powerful stars just can't catch a break. Alas, all those days running around like Chicken Little telling people that the world is ending or ranting that "the caves won't save us!" doesn't leave much time to file the necessary papers. Despite how many prophetic visions he's had of the apocalypse, he somewhat ironically couldn't predict his own financial devastation.

How'd he get burned, you ask? According to *Access Hollywood*, Cage is blaming his former alleged "incompetent" business manager, Samuel J. Levin, for "sending Cage down a path toward financial ruin" and paying himself "millions of dollars," while diverting Cage's precious Benjamins into "risky" and "highly

speculative" investments. It wasn't immediately clear exactly which recent investments sent the star of *G-Force*, *Knowing*, *Ghost Rider*, *Bangkok Dangerous*, and *Next* down the road towards fiscal insolvency but one thing is certain: Cage was at absolutely no fault here and was completely led astray by this bloodthirsty managerial vampire. Or alleged vampire.

Sadly, for all cinematic connoisseurs and fans of gentlemanly class, refined taste, and Nicolas-Cage-in-a-bear-suit-punching-women grace, this does not bode well for any future *Wicker Man 2* prospects. Or *2 Bangkok 2 Dangerous*, for that matter.

JOHN KMECH

Flop Culture is a semi-regular feature in which Gateway pop culture pundits shake their literary fists at ridiculous events or celebrities deserving of an inky bitch-slap.



albumreview

Sufjan Stevens
The BQE
Asthmatic Kitty

LANCE MUDRYK
Arts & Entertainment Staff

In his latest work, Sufjan Stevens is in a place far away from his masterpiece, *Illinois*. Okay, I guess he's only about 1,500 kilometres east in New York City, but somewhere on the drive there, he's lost his voice, as *The BQE* is primarily an orchestra suite.

Stevens was inspired by the ugly mess that is the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, one of North America's most poorly planned and built urban roadways. In his attempt to find beauty in a place of ugliness, he creates this non-narrative arrangement of pieces that purposefully switches with little grace between orchestral and experimental rock. Early on, the

performance borders on dull, but by "Movement III: Linear Tableau with Intersecting Surprise" you can begin to see his style come together.

Woodwinds dance dreamily before you're kidnapped by "Movement IV: Traffic Shock," where Stevens' Electronica influences make their first appearance. The album ends with a booming sendoff, but leaves you longing to hear Stevens' melancholy voice.

Accompanying the album is a DVD filmed by Stevens and cinematographer Reuben Kleiner. Like the album, there's no story — just reoccurring motifs and images. At first it seems to be no more than a glorified opening credits montage: simple, hand-filmed

shots of buildings and cars seem to drag on forever as you wait for something to happen.

Although thematically significant, the sections with cute girls hula-hooping seem out of place in this slice-of-life film. The DVD is completely in split-screen, so if you're bored by one the images, there's always two others to choose to look at instead. Where the soundtrack becomes interesting, the film does as well. In "Movement IV: Traffic Shock", the film takes on the point-of-view of the car as it blazes down the road in fast-motion. The film also uses slow-motion, but like driving, it's much less fun to be stuck in gridlock traffic than it is flying down roads, well above the speed limit.

The BQE is an impressive demonstration of Stevens' diversity, but the work feels more like an epic art project than something you'd recommend to your friends. Though it's a mostly enjoyable experiment, I hope Stevens takes the next exit off this expressway and gets back to exploring America's 50 states.