

★ Starline Rhythm Boys

SEVEN DAYS

January 3, 2001

Top 10 Vermont Recordings of the Year

It's a good thing the year 2000 arrived without the dreaded Y2K meltdown, or any other doomsday scenario (remember those?), otherwise we might be too busy collecting firewood and fighting over saved rainwater to compile this list. Come to think of it, Vermont musicians would have been hard-pressed to even make these recordings. Let's just stop right here and have a moment of silence for electricity, and perhaps another 30 seconds for digital technology.

As it is, winnowing the output of Vermont-made recordings over 12 months is hard enough. On the other hand, the productivity level in local original music projects remained fairly consistent with last year's — which is to say, down from the outrageously prolific 1998 (especially rock). Given the influx of new bands in the area this year, though, 2001 just might bring a deluge of little flat packages to our mailbox.

Hint: To increase chances of a favorable review, send chocolates.

Just kidding.

Where were we? Yes. If anyone is actually reading this and didn't just selfishly skip to the list below, let us explain that, in order to reach our arbitrarily imposed limit of 10, we decided to eliminate from consideration EPs, which unfortunately struck out Chin Ho!'s excellent *Girl*, among others. We also removed compilations, releases by local musicians on major labels, such as The Jazz Mandolin Quartet (*Xenobiast*) and Phish (*Farmhouse*), and projects by former Vermonters, such as Bag of Panties (*Tomorrow Will Be My Dancing Day*).

Perhaps we should also state the obvious: that our contenders were from those CDs actually reviewed this year in *Seven Days*. Any recordings we received too late in December will be considered next year.

Finally, in the case of bands with more than one item in their discography, we found ourselves comparing this year's release against previous ones... that we might have thought were better. So, let us lay to rest any suspicions this list is arrived at by coin toss, lottery or butterfly ballots. We thought long and hard on this one because, you know, we really love all our children equally.

And now, before the *real* millennium comes to an end, here are our choices for the top 10 Vermont recordings of 2000, listed in no particular order.

1. Gregory Douglass,
Gregory Douglass
2. Starline Rhythm Boys,
Better Luck is a Barroom Away
3. The Halogens,
Gin and Nothing
4. DysFunkShun,
Hi-Fi Stereotype
5. Patti Casey,
Under Different Skies
6. Will Patton,
Latitudes and Departures
7. Atlantic Crossing,
Far and Away
8. Drowningman,
Rock and Roll Killing Machine
9. Strangefolk,
A Great Long While
10. Buck & the Black Cats,
Ask for Buck & the Black Cats

— Pamela Polston