



**THE MOTHER HIPPS**  
*Kiss the Crystal Flake*  
CAMERA

79%

It may, initially, seem a good idea to combine one part Matthew Sweet with a dash of Pavement and a pinch of CSNY. Unfortunately the result on *Kiss the Crystal Flake* is more akin to CSNY, the bastard cousin of everyone's favorite procedural drama. *Vegas* has showgirls, *Miami* has David Caruso, but *New York* has...the chick from *Providence*? Original ideas are groundbreaking, and some spin-offs find their own voice, but most imitations, like the Mother Hips, are just palatable but dull reconstructions of someone else's success. JEREMY MOEHLMANN



**PELICAN**  
*City Of Echoes*  
HYDRAHEAD

82%

If you wanna get all ornithological, then you'd have to say that Pelican is the bird that shits metal pellets—the bird that doesn't sing, but certainly shreds. Like the last few eggs plopped, this hatchling's almost-live production spreads a chunky *foie gras* over a main course of guitar sometimes raw, sometimes simmering, sometimes seared. Pelican's *instrumental* might not fly as high as fellow travelers Isis (whose namesake was a damn fine bird), but there's wingspan aplenty here to ride out the storm. SAM ROUDMAN

book



*Dear Diary*  
LESLIE ARFIN  
VICE

84%

Like, so, this book is totally like a bunch of real diary entries by this girl who's gone through all these totally sucky phases in her life like heroin addiction and liking all these boys who totally don't like her back and it's like totally entertaining on one hand but then when you really like think about it you get super bummed, like who would want to reveal all their deepest darkest secrets, but then on the other hand maybe that's what makes it pretty rad. Whatever. Oh yeah, she totally interviews all these people who she wrote about in her diary too. ESTHER GINN



**ALIAS**  
*Collected Remixes*  
ANTICON

87%

The kick drum booms like the footsteps of a giant rumbling through the cacophony of a foggy forest. The pacing and energy feel like a steady march toward destiny. Add Alias' trademark layers of synth, guitar and ambient noise until each original (by folk as diverse as John Vanderslice, Sixtoo, Arab Strap's Aiden Moffat, the One AM Radio,

Lunz, and Lali Puna) becomes so massive that it rolls into oblivion. Alias' touch may leave your ears ringing and your balance off, but *Remixes* is well worth the experience. JEREMY MOEHLMANN



**POLYPHONIC SPREE**  
*The Fragile Army*  
TVT

84%

Besides a few unorthodox gems, *The Fragile Army* succeeds mostly at retreading the sunshine-beaten path of the Spree's previous two outings. On songs like "Get Up and Go" and "Running Away," the 23-peopled collective projects fleeting melodies that sound like a bunch of pop psychologists with a mean case of confirmation bias. The baroque lyrics on "Light to Follow" prove to be one of the album's defiantly interesting moments, but these are too scattered to offer much new to the casual listener. Spree fans, however, shall rejoice. CAMERON BIRD

dvd



*You're Gonna Miss Me: A Film About Roky Erickson*  
DIRECTED BY KEVIN  
MCALESTER  
PALM PICTURES

92%

The Roky Erickson story could easily succumb to the hackneyed trappings of stock music bios: Rock genius goes off the rails and disappears into the haze of drugs and mental illness. But freshman documentarian McAlester deftly circumvents clichés in telling the tale of the '60s psych-rock innovator and former 13th Floor Elevators frontman. The narrative doesn't suffer under the weight of reverence for its subject, providing honesty and warmth that's uncommon in the age of sensationalism. ANTHONY RAYBORN



**SOCALLED**  
*GhettoBlaster*  
JDUB

88%

The answer is yes. "Yes, an accordion-wielding magician can assemble a cast of Yiddish music authorities, Canadian Klezmer superstars, up-and-coming soul singers and underground NYC rappers to make an album that masterfully weaves traditional Hebrew sounds into the re-stitched fabric of hip-hop." On *GhettoBlaster*, Québécois quadruple threat (squeezebox, beats, raps, magic hats) SoCalled proves his chops, emerging with his version of Wyclef's *The Carnival* (replace the voodoo with Jewdoo) and one of 2007's sleeper singles, "You Are Never Alone" featuring C Rayz Walz, two soul sisters and a perky Western-tinged bounce. Yiddyup! JACK MGRUE