



## Lifetime

*Lifetime*  
(Decaydance/Fueled By Ramen)

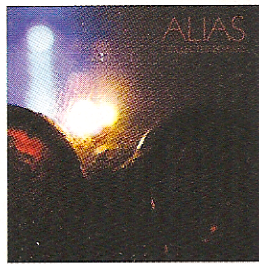
★★★★☆

It feels like just yesterday that I was hurrying to the record store alongside other hardcore and punk fans eager to get a copy of what was then Lifetime's final artistic statement, *Jersey's Best Dancers*. To quantify the time passed since that day is even stranger, but here we are, 10 years older, and listening to a fresh collection of songs by the same band that helped carve a genre

from nothing more than the basic elements of melody, raw power, and emotion. The biggest question is, what has changed since 1997? Not much. Lifetime's return to the studio has yielded a result surprisingly comparable to the band's previous two albums. In under three minutes a cut, each of Lifetime's 11 tracks still pack the group's familiar punch while leaving room for singer Ari Katz' unparalleled melodic stamp. Although not highly inventive, Lifetime is safe listening for anyone looking to celebrate that band they once loved, and still do.

—Dan Masek

**Standout track:** "Spiders in a Garden"



## Alias

*Collected Remixes*  
(Anticon Records)

★★★★☆

Remix albums aren't usually my cup of tea. Other artists reinterpreting one artist often yield scattered results—the main artist getting lost in a hazy shuffle, sounding like he's drowning underwater while some backwards guitars loop over and over. Alias' *Collected Remixes* is obviously a mix album, albeit one with much more streamlined results. The album works as a whole mainly because it is

Alias remixing other artists, not vice-versa. His unique beat-play runs rampant throughout the album, yet he never forsakes the songs' structures for his staggering drums or jagged bass lines. The artists he chooses to remix—13 & God, Lali Puna, and Lucky Pierre amongst others—are all cut from the same melancholic cloth, Alias ably retaining the vocals of each song while stamping the tracks with the spasmodic, loose breaks he's used for Anticon MCs like Sole and Dose One. This juxtaposition of disruption and cadence is most evident on tracks like "Stay Awake," his reworking of "Boy in Static," fragile vocals that wouldn't sound out of place on a Belle and Sebastian record enveloped by agitated, nervous drums that leave just enough space for melody to seep through. With his penchant for head-nodding, lilting rhythms, Alias breathes new life into songs you might otherwise fall asleep to. —William Nguyen

**Standout track:** "Stay Awake," Remix for Boy in Static



## Shitake Monkey

*Street Beef*  
(Outlook)

★★★★☆

The story behind this album is as follows: the three comprising the group—Johnny Rodeo, Electric Pete, and Chuck Brody—are experienced former Sony Music Studio producers who formed with the intention of combining their talent and knowledge with musical ideas they'd kept pent up for too long. The result is an extremely well produced, quirky, and impressive album with many layers

of appeal. It's difficult to keep up with the skillful engineering and mixing, but there's really no point since the songs are super catchy with groove to spare. It's nice to see these guys putting out something for themselves, because their ideas are worthy and the execution is flawless. Producing for J-Lo and mixing for Michael Jackson could be considered career highs, but luckily these dudes have artistic needs. —Dustin Umberger

**Standout track:** "Two Dudes"

# Sonic Sites: pandora.com

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