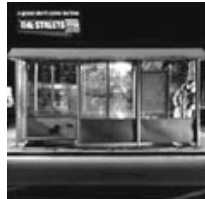


No bling bling gangster rap - just the good stuff

music



A Grand Don't Come For Free
The Streets
Vice/Atlantic

"See, I reckon you're about an eight or a nine, maybe even nine and a half in four beers time.

"That blue *Top Shop* top you've got on is nice — bit too much fake tan though — but yeah you score high."

The Streets aka Mike Skinner tells it exactly like it is on the brilliant new album *A Grand Don't Come For Free*.

It boldly goes where few hip hop albums have gone before.

To the streets. The real streets. For those who aren't familiar with the Brit-hop phenomenon, The Streets is hip-hop with a blend of "geezer" culture, jungle,

house, and garage music from London's pirate radio scene.

Birmingham-born and bred, Skinner explores what it's like to be a young "geezer" — girls, drugs, a thousand quid, broken TVs, and those days you can't help feeling would have been better had you just stayed in bed.

From tripping out in a nightclub to TV dinners on a girlfriend's couch, *A Grand Don't Come For Free* (2004) is refreshing and level-headed, a far cry from stagnant American gangster rap that hasn't evolved in the past 10 years.

What's more, it's probably the

only hip-hop album around where you're likely to find the words "bloke" and "chap" in the lyrics.

Tracks include the energetic and radio friendly *Fit But You Know It*, and the latest single *Dry Your Eyes Mate* — a deeply melancholic ballad that deals with the heartache of breaking up.

Dry Your Eyes Mate originally featured fellow Brit, Coldplay's Chris Martin, but both Skinner and Martin decided it wasn't right for the overall effect of the track.

In comparison to The Streets' last record, *Original Pirate Material* (2002), *A Grand Don't*

Come For Free is considerably more mainstream and less experimental, or perhaps it's just that Skinner's thick accent is easier to listen to the second time around.

It's consistent, and you can listen to it in its entirety, which is lucky because this album tells a carefully crafted story from beginning to end.

So if you're in the market for big-booty hos, Bentleys and bling bling, you need not listen.

For some real life hip-hop, street style, get into *A Grand Don't Come For Free*.

All right?
— Hayley Lynch

Somerset takes giant strides to rock crown

music



Somerset
Say What you Mean
CasadelDisco Records

So far, 2004 has been a great year for New Zealand music, with chart-topping performances from most of our eclectic musical whanau.

What has been lacking is a new release from a quality hard rock/metal/punk band.

The good news is that Auckland's Somerset have just released their third album and what a kick-ass full-frontal attack on the senses, it is.

Say What You Mean is the culmination of eight years building their signature guitar-sound and the tightness that comes from near-constant touring.

The songs are their strongest yet and the lavish production adds a melodic touch that takes

their sound to a new dimension.

Engineered by Andrew Buckton, who has worked with Crowded House, Dave Dobbyn, Bic Runga and Supergroove, the album was recorded at Auckland's York Street Studio and mastered at Sydney's famous 230.

It has two strong singles to drive it and the potential to move the band away from cult-following status.

The lost art of long guitar intros has been brought back and, as odious as comparisons can be, there is no getting away from more than a passing reference to Irish rocker Gary Moore's 1980s sound, the intensity of The Datsuns and song structure of

Pacifier.

Lead singer/guitarist Ryan Thomas has made a conscious move lyrically away from lovey-dovey themes, and for the most part he is on top of his game here.

The opening title track is the new single and video release, and here Thomas writes of the need to say what you want because the world does not care anyway:

"Nothing in your culture takes you where you want to be and nothing shakes that numbness at the heart of everything. Sometimes it feels like you were born missing a layer of skin and you'd cut yourself up to feel anything. Anything."

The pace rarely lets up throughout, although the songs

do have enough subtle changes and melodic guitar lines to breathe on their own.

Inside has the year's most infectious riff and the stirring guitars on *Blackheart* sound as if Thomas and fellow guitarist Milon Williams plugged their guitars straight into their hearts.

Faded has a football terrace-like chorus that demands notice while *Exclusion* rips along at break-neck speed on Stefan Thompson's rolling bass line.

Somerset have earned the right to drop the punk tag associated with them.

Now where is that crown that Pacifier used to wear?

— Peter White

ART, FILM, MUSIC, THEATRE, SHOWS

ART

Max Gimblett - The Brush of All Things

Internationally renowned Kiwi painter Max Gimblett's first ever public gallery exhibition covers 25 years of broad highly stylistic work.

Until Aug 29
Auckland Art Gallery
Cnr Wellesley & Lorne Streets, City
Daily 10am-5pm
Ph: 307 4540.

Re-Vision

Impressionist painter Vern Brocas' oil on canvas and board artwork conceptualises the convergence of beauty with the sublime.

Aug 20 - Sep 8
Morgan Street Gallery
9 Morgan St, Newmarket
Tues-Fri 10am-5.30pm
Sat 11am-3.30pm
Ph: 358 0577.

Colliding cultures

Wellington jeweller Peter Deckers' light, sound and jewellery exhibition explores the exchanges that occur when two cultures collide, and the effect of immigration on individuals and nations.

Until Aug 29
Lopdell House Gallery
Cnr Titirangi & Sth Titirangi Rds
Daily 10am - 4.30pm
Ph: 817 808

Annual Catalogue Exhibition

More than 60 investment artworks will be displayed by the Gow Langsford and John Leech Galleries in their annual exhibition. Artworks include engravings, maps of NZ, and contemporary work by artists such as Colin McCahon and Ralph Hotere. The work is illustrated in a full colour booklet with accompanying text.

Aug 24 - Sept 18
Gow Langsford Gallery
Cnr Wellesley and Kitchener St, City.
Mon-Fri 10am-6pm
Sat 11am-3pm
Ph: 303 4290

Exposed

This show celebrates the diversity of artists and their response to working in the same medium. Curated by Sarah Clacher, the show will explore the role of cast glass as an expressive vehicle. The artists are: Pam Olver, Jacqui Stumpel, Susan Louie, John Ecuyer, Don Salt, Evelyn Dunstan and Alex Milsom.

Aug 25 - 15 Sept
Uxbridge Gallery
25 Uxbridge Rd, Howick
Mon-Fri 10am-4pm
Ph: 535 6467.

FILM

Hero

Directed by Yimou Zhang, this is the story of a Chinese king who wants

three assassins killed, and offers gold to anyone who can defeat them. Full of action, special effects but also love, this film was nominated for Best Foreign Film award at the 2002 Academy Awards.

Showing From Thurs Aug 26: at Rialto cinemas.

Touching the Void

Adapted from Joe Simpson's book about his and Simon Yates catastrophic descent after climbing Peru's Siula Grande in 1985. Simpson injured his leg and was lowered rope-length by rope-length. Dangling over a cliff Yates was forced to cut the rope sending his friend to certain death and climb down alone. But Simpson survived and this is his stunning story.

Showing from Aug 19: Bridgeway and Rialto.

Ruby and Quentin

Gerard Depardieu and Jean Reno star as a good natured idiot and a hard nosed criminal who escape from prison to an adventure on the streets of Paris. A slapstick comedy from French master director Francis Veber.

Showing from Aug 19: Bridgeway and Rialto.

The Dreamers

The Paris riots of 1968 form a metaphor for the upheaval in the world of a visiting American student when he is befriended by a brother and sister and embarks on a journey of sexual exper-

imentation and mind games.

Showing from Aug 19: The Academy.

ON AUT

23-27 August

International Week. International student performances and speeches showcase multiculturalism in AUT.

Thursday August 26

Vesbar — Toga Party for the closing Olympic ceremony

Friday August 27

Vesbar— Eclectic Groove — House band and DJ

Saturday August 28

AUT ball — Tickets available from the AuSM office. \$45 includes complimentary drinks and nibbles. Ball to be held at the Saatchi and Saatchi building.

August 30 - September 10

AuSM election Awareness Campaign. Candidate speeches, debates and free feeds for those who turn up.

Wednesday September 1

Vesbar — Freaky Meat — poet and band

Friday September 3

Akl Gym — Tertiary Challenge

STATIC 88.1 FM

AUT's year three BCS radio students present STATIC — AUT's own radio station. The students are aiming for sophisticated sounds, playing mostly down-beat house music. Each show will have a similar sound but some dj's will have their own genres.

Shows are Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 8am to 5pm, and Tuesday and Thursday from 8am to 6pm.

PLANET 104.6 FM

Planet FM is the only multilingual station in Auckland, providing 143 different programmes.

Here are some programmes to look out for:

Mondays — Niuean, 5.25pm
Hip Hop 10.20pm
Tuesdays — Dalmatian, 8.10pm
Tamil, 8.45pm
Wednesdays — Sri Lankan, 8.15pm
Portuguese, 8.50pm
Thursdays — Gay and Lesbian, 7am
Cook Islands, 6.30pm
Fridays — Dutch, 7.05pm
Rwanda, 8.10pm
Saturdays — Tongan 6am
Spanish, 10am
Irish, 11.35am
Vietnamese, 1.50pm