



by Michael Coleman and Ashley Estill

On Tap takes a look at four local and touring bands each month. If you are interested in being featured, please send your CD along with contact information, including your website and a list of upcoming shows to On Tap Magazine. Attention Four Play: 25 S. Dove St., Alexandria, VA 22314

DEAN FIELDS

WEB: www.deanfields.com

ALBUM: Under a Searchlight Moon



SHOW: Friday, July 15; IOTA Club and Café, Arlington, VA

If Dean Fields was looking for a high-powered endorsement for his contemporary brand of folk music, he hit the jackpot when Roseanne Cash – daughter of Johnny Cash and a legendary songwriter herself – declared him a “great songwriter.” Fields’ latest recorded effort finds the Richmond native delivering an EP of five well-crafted folk-pop songs that unspool quickly and seamlessly with top-notch songwriting throughout. “Nowhere Fast” is an upbeat but plaintive track lamenting a less-than-truthful lover. “Forever Never Knowing” rides on a simple acoustic guitar line and soft drumming with the lyrics and Fields’ pleasant tenor taking front-and-center. Throughout the disc, Trey Pollard’s standout lap steel guitar gives the music a rootsy feel without quite veering into country territory. “Under a Searchlight Moon” is certain to help Fields continue to broaden his already promising horizons.-MC

IOTA Club and Cafe: 2832 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA; 703-522-8340; www.iotaclubandcafe.com.

LUCKY DUB

WEB: www.luckydub.com

ALBUM: Mindset



SHOW: Friday, July 1; Rock and Roll Hotel, DC

Just in time for summer, Lucky Dub – nominated for best DC reggae band at the 2010 Wammie Awards – brings us their infectious brand of world-influenced party music on their new full-length studio album, “Mindset.” This musically-accomplished group of international musicians keeps things light from the start with “No Money, No Worries,” a plea for those collections agents calling from “1-866” numbers to leave them alone. “Move On” creeps up slowly with a solid bass line, lilting keys and fat horns lend the song even more drama before a slinky electric guitar brings the entire jam to a boil. Clocking in at 15 generous tracks, “Mindset” is a perfect platter of party tunes ready for your next backyard barbecue or beach trip.-MC

Rock N Roll Hotel: 1353 H St. NE, DC; 202-388-7625; www.rockandrollhoteldc.com.

THE SILENT CRITICS

WEB: www.silentcriticsmusic.com

ALBUM: Chemical Avalanches and Toxic Romances



SHOW: Saturday, July 23; Hard Times Café, Arlington, VA (CD Release)

After teasing us with amazing stage presence and instant hits like “Dissonance,” The Silent Critics have finally released Chemical Avalanches and Toxic Romances, an album that was three years in the works. Their live performances translate well in this album: it has high energy and a natural sound that is effortless to listen to. Lead singer Liam Garland’s voice is so distinct that you’ll remember all of these tracks. Chemical Avalanches and Toxic Romances boasts traditional pop/rock songs, as well as a few slow ballads in the mix, allowing the album to maintain its cohesiveness without being repetitious. With honest lyrics, you won’t be skipping tracks on this one. Listen for more upbeat songs like “Easier Said Than Done” and “Off My Chest” for some head boppin’ tunes – and my two personal favorites besides their signature song, “Dissonance.” This one was well worth the wait.-AE

Hard Times Cafe: 3028 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA; 703-528-2233; www.hardtimes.com.

DAN FISK

WEB: www.danfisk.com

ALBUM: Bruises From The Backseat



SHOW: Thursday, July 21; Axum’s Level X Lounge, DC

Although singer/songwriter Dan Fisk only has six tracks on his EP, it’s enough to intrigue you for his next. Intelligent, calming and freshly-acoustic, Fisk really shines on this one. “A Thousand Love Songs” demonstrates his impressive vocals and songwriting ability. Sweet and melodic, you’ll put this one on repeat. his guitar riffs are present Throughout the album, but not overpowering – you can still really listen to his music. He’s diverse enough that you can’t really put a label on his music, though you just have to enjoy how easy-going his sound is. Musically sound, simple and sincere, an indie version of Pat McGee and Jason Mraz is what you get with Fisk.-AE

Axum’s Level X Lounge: 1934 9th St NW, DC; 202-387-0765; www.levelxlounge.com.