

A Musical Review

- Liam Reilly

The following are two music reviews based on specific albums.

Demi Lovato: Demi

There is some good and bad news that comes with the release of *Demi*, the fourth studio album of Demi Lovato. The good news is that it seems as though Demi has managed to recover from the personal issues that have hindered her career as of late. The bad news is that Demi Lovato is still under the firm grip of Disney, the corporation that gave her career a jumpstart. Now, Demi must work to shake the Disney image, a daunting task which her predecessors (Miley Cyrus, Selena Gomez) have struggled to achieve.

The album begins with a bang, with the chart-favorite "Heart Attack." However, the rest of the album fails in supporting the strong sound of "Heart Attack". Rather, the majority of the other songs, while showing off the immense capability of Demi's voice, have a juvenile and Disney essence to them, an unfortunate side effect of Demi's previous career choices. Although generally lacking in big-ticket pop songs, Demi shows the growing maturity of Lovato, and is a step in the right direction. If she is able to shake the grip of Disney, Demi's musical future seems bright (5.5/10). Key Tracks: "Heart Attack," and "Really Don't Care (feat. Cher Lloyd)."

Daft Punk: Random Access Memories.

After a six-year hiatus, the dance/electronic giant that is Daft Punk has completed its fourth studio album, and not a moment too soon. *RAM* will be released on Tuesday, May 21, but has been available for streaming online for the last few days. After listening to the complete sonic odyssey (74 minutes of audio), *RAM* does not disappoint. One of the great qualities of Daft Punk is that they refuse to conform. Rather, the French duo strives to innovate. This allows for the group to create music that comes out of left field, and yet is made with such conviction that one has to be impressed. Having already revolutionized the dance/electronic genre over the last fifteen years, Daft Punk does so again on *RAM*. The first thing one should notice when listening to *RAM* is that, with the exception of the hit single "Get Lucky (feat. Pharrell Williams)," the vocals of every song on the album are recorded with a vocoder, a device used to give vocals a robotic and auto-tuned sound. While the use of a vocoder usually causes vocals to sound less human, the vocals on *RAM* are filled with emotion, giving each song a signature Daft Punk futuristic/robotic, and yet very human sound. The second thing one should notice when listening to *RAM* is that although characterized as a dance/electronic album, many of the songs on the album do not match that description, and sound more like rock influenced disco songs than anything else. In fact, the four or five pop/rock songs on *RAM* are better than most of the pop/rock genre currently, which is not even the targeted genre of the album. The rather eclectic list of guests on *RAM* goes along with the wow factor of the album, with the likes of legendary guitarist Nile Rogers, hip-hop powerhouse Pharrell Williams, and Julian Casablancas of The Strokes. Oh, and if you are looking for old-fashioned dance/electronic music, Daft Punk supplies that as well. Songs like "Contact" will remind you of dance/electronic of the earlier days

of Daft Punk, with plenty of synth and drums. RAM in my eyes is an early contender for Album of the Year, and reminds the rest of the world who the giants of the dance/electronic genre really are. (9.25/10) Key Tracks: “Instant Crush (feat. Julian Casablancas),” “Get Lucky (feat. Pharrell Williams),” and “Doin’ It Right (feat. Panda Bear).”

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