# Entertainment Weekly

September 9, 2000

## » Reissues

**BRIAN WILSON • Brian Wilson** *(Rhino/Warner Bros.)* If this 1988 solo debut had been a full-band effort with brother Carl on vocals, it would've been the best Beach Boys album since the '60s. Heck, let's call it that anyway. A Lindsey Buckingham-produced B-side is best among the 13 bonus tracks; more superfluous are some demos seemingly included to disprove the rumor that Wilson's vocals were pieced together by producers. **A** —*Chris Willman*

**TAJ MAHAL • Taj Mahal; The Natch'l Blues; The Real Thing; The Best of Taj Mahal** *(Columbia/Legacy)* To late-'60s rock fans reeling from psychedelia, Taj Mahal's sturdy blues were a breath of fresh air. Taj's self-titled debut (like all of these, previously unavailable Stateside on CD) explodes with high spirits; of Taj's 30-plus albums, it might be the best. *Natch'l Blues* ('68) was lower-key; a supple smile of an album, while '71's *The Real Thing*, marred only by overlong jams, kicked butt live at the Fillmore East. *Best of* draws from his first nine LPs, some of which remain out of print. *Taj Mahal*: **A** *Natch'l*: **A–** *Real Thing*: **B+** *Best of*: **A** —*Tony Scherman*

## » Country

**KEVIN GORDON • Down to the Well** *(Shanachie)* Writing with the poetry and economy of Dave Alvin and Lucinda Williams (who guests on the title song), the Louisiana roots-rocker returns with more gritty portraits of the down-and-out who can't go home again. He evokes the scorching guitar intensity of Springsteen, an obvious influence on his songs of drunks, highway shootings, and the rusted rails of abandoned towns. **B+** —*Alanna Nash*

**RYAN ADAMS • Hearts** *(Bloodshot)* Whiskeytown's Adams is a brash, alt-country ballad with a rock instinct. The women in his songs steal his shirts and records; that's why he loves them. Guests on this mostly subdued solo project include the shadowy tandem of Gillian Welch and David Rawlings, and the magnificent Emmylou Harris, who—harmonizing on "Oh My Sweet Carolina"—helps cement Adams' rep as a latter-day Gram Parsons. **B+** —*James Sullivan*

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THE CHARTS

## RE-MOUNT FUGEE?

**TOO *ECLECTIC* FOR ITS own good? The second solo album from former Fugee Wyclef Jean had a merely okay debut at No. 9, selling 95,000 units. A hip-hop album sporting guests Kenny Rogers and wrestler The Rock, not to mention a cover of a Pink Floyd oldie, *The Eclectic* had something for everybody...and something to baffle everybody, too. Remarkably, the Nos. 1–8 positions were unchanged from last week. Nelly held the top spot for the third consecutive week, with 213,500 copies sold. Britney Spears, whose tally was enhanced by 173,000, grabbed the No. 2 slot for the seventh straight week, speaking of doing it again.**

POP ALBUMS

| LAST WEEK | THIS WEEK | | WEEKS ON CHART |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | NELLY *Country Grammar*, Fo' Reel/Universal | 9 |
| 2 | 2 | BRITNEY SPEARS *Oops!...I Did It Again*, Jive | 15 |
| 3 | 3 | EMINEM *The Marshall Mathers LP*, Interscope | 14 |
| 4 | 4 | VARIOUS ARTISTS *NOW That's What I Call Music! 4*, Uni/Utv | 6 |
| 5 | 5 | CREED *Human Clay*, Wind-Up | 48 |
| 6 | 6 | 'N SYNC *No Strings Attached*, Jive | 23 |
| 7 | 7 | 3 DOORS DOWN *The Better Life*, Republic/Universal | 29 |
| 8 | 8 | PAPA ROACH *Lovehatetragedy*, Interscope | 18 |
| 9 | — | WYCLEF JEAN *The Eclectic*, Columbia | 1 |
| 10 | 11 | [illegible] | 4 |
| 11 | 9 | [illegible] | 48 |
| 12 | 12 | [illegible] | 57 |
| 13 | [illegible] | [illegible] | 64 |
| 14 | [illegible] | [illegible] | [illegible] |

» Country
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(Shanachie) Writing with the poetry and economy of Dave Alvin and Lucinda Williams (who guests on the title song), the Louisiana roots-rocker returns with more gritty portraits of the down-and-out who can't go home again. He evokes the scorching guitar intensity of Springsteen, an obvious influence on his songs of drunks, highway shootings, and the rusted rails of abandoned towns. B+ —Alanna Nash

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[illegible] and, Ore., and [illegible] their band's [illegible]

[illegible] complete his first- [illegible] ERON is beating skins [illegible] ber.

[illegible] Tape

MINNIE [illegible] Credible Sound of Gilles Peterson): Brit DJ resc[illegible] from late "Lovin' You" songbird.

NINA GORDON, "2003" [illegible] My Life): Ex-Veruca Salt-er instantly renders the ba[illegible] necessary.

JO DEE MESSINA, "Burn" (Burn): Co[illegible] diva ignites Tina Arena's power ballad. Somewhere, a jealous Faith Hill is singing along.

DJ QUIK, "Change Da Game" (Balance & Options): Quik's rapping doesn't change any clichés, but the gliding, full-bodied beats do.

STANFORD MARCHING BAND, "Uncle John's Band" (Stolen Roses: Songs of the Grateful Dead): Just what it promises. Answering-machine music of the month.