

THE YEAR’S TOP

Music

BEST AREA CONCERTS

BY LISA SIDES
LIVE MUSIC FAN EXTRAORDINAIRE



If you haven’t heard these bands yet and you love music, then take the time to check them out. You won’t be disappointed. As novelist Berthold Auerbach said, “Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.”

1. The Logic

The best performance this year would have to be the Hickory Alive show on June 20. The Logic had an estimated 6,000 people in attendance. The Logic gets the crowd dancing with their stage presence and charisma. They know how to connect with the crowd and always guarantee a great show.

2. The Newz

They packed the house at Sergeant Peppers and put on an awesome show on March 22. It was standing room only and some of the fans were on stage with the band.

3. Black Glass

If you like rock — hard rock — then you will love Black Glass. They have followers who consider themselves part of “Black Glass Nation.” They had lots of shows this year, but the one that I think rocked the most was to the huge crowd in Hickory on March 29.

4. Billy Currington

This well-known country singer isn’t local, but he does come around the area from time to time. He performed last year at the Historic Morganton festival to a huge crowd, but this year I saw him in Clemmons on Sept. 20. He is quiet in person but what a show he puts on when he is on stage.

5. Chrome

Another great band that sets itself apart from the rest is Chrome. They put on an awesome show in Hickory on Nov. 15. When they are playing, you can’t help but dance.

6. Blake Wise

He’s got a sound all his own and the look of a superstar. Blake Wise is a whole lot of country with a little bit of rock ‘n’ roll. His performance at Wayneo’s Silver Bullet on Jan. 26 was one that was hard to forget.

7. Charity Case

It was hard to believe the crowd that showed up at Hickory’s Oktoberfest on Oct. 10 for the best Charity Case performance I’ve ever seen. Their music is great, as is the charity that benefits from their proceeds, Ace & TJ’s Grin Kids.

8. The Extraordinaires

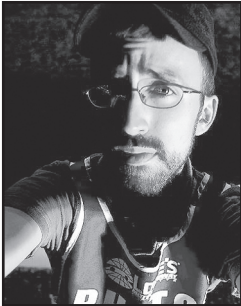
With their big-band sound and their Aloha shirts, these guys have a compilation that will make you want to dance. This was another one of the bands that put on a great performance at the 2008 Hickory Oktoberfest.

9. Mustang Sally

This is an all girl-band, reminiscent of the Dixie Chicks. They have a way of projecting a high-energy show that makes for a great performance. The girls Rocked Catawba County at Wayneo’s Silver Bullet on March 22.

10. Sunny Ledford

Two guys that have a unique and eclectic style all their own. Their songs are the type you will be singing all day long. One of their best shows I got to see was in February at Sergeant Peppers of Hickory.



BEST INDIE ALBUMS

BY ALAN ROGERS
HICKORY DAILY RECORD PHOTOGRAPHER/INDIE FAN



1. “At Mount Zoomer” by Wolf Parade

With only nine tracks and barely 45 minutes in length, “At Mount Zoomer” is a short record, but you might not notice because you’ll be playing it over and over. Natives of Montreal, the indie music scene’s friendly neighbor to the north, Wolf Parade piles great vocal imagery on top of instrumentation and sound manipulation that defy description. Unless you were one of the fans who waited three long years for this album to be released, you’ll have nothing to complain about.

2. “Evil Urges” by My Morning Jacket

Southern-rock-and-jam-band-influenced My Morning Jacket turns up the energy in their newest album, bringing the listener a little bit closer to the experience of their electrical live performances. Warning: If you plan on singing in the shower, don’t try hitting the high notes lead man Jim James has such mastery over. Some things are best left to the professionals.

3. “Walk it Off” by Tapes ‘n Tapes

Tapes ‘n Tapes start with the layered vocal and guitar harmonies and finger-tapping drums that made their first album an underground success, then crank up the intensity for “Walk it Off.” More complex compositions and performances show the band members’ development as musicians and ability to grow while still hanging onto their unique sound.

4. “Vampire Weekend” by Vampire Weekend

If you see someone listening to their iPod with an extra bounce in their step, Vampire Weekend’s debut full-length album might be to blame. You may need to break out the dictionary to look up titles like “Mansard Roof,” “Oxford Comma” and “Cape Cod Kwassa Kwassa” but the songs themselves are refreshingly simple with crisp vocals and a twinge of calypso influence.

5. “The Virginia EP” by The National

“The Virginia EP” is a treasure chest of studio tracks, b-sides, demos and live performances just waiting to be discovered. New songs like “You’ve Done it Again, Virginia” pair nicely with alternate versions of fan favorites like “Slow Show” and “Fake Empire” to give a well-rounded look at the band’s talent in the recording studio and on stage. New listeners might want to check out their previous albums, “Alligator” and “Boxer,” first.

Rap, classical, dance, soundtracks: Billboard scores the tunes

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hottest rap songs of 2008

1. “Lollipop,” Lil Wayne feat. Static Major. Cash Money/Universal Motown.
2. “Low,” Flo Rida feat. T-Pain. Poe Boy/Atlantic.
3. “Bust It Baby Part 2,” Plies feat. Ne-Yo. Big Gates/Slip-n-Slide/Atlantic.
4. “Whatever You Like,” T.I. Grand Hustle/Atlantic.
5. “A Milli,” Lil Wayne. Cash Money/Universal Motown.
6. “Independent,” Webbie feat. Lil’ Phat & Lil’ Boosie. Trill/Asylum/Atlantic.
7. “Got Money,” Lil Wayne feat. T-Pain. Cash Money/Universal Motown.
8. “Get Like Me,” David Banner feat. Chris Brown. B.I.G. F.A.C.E./SRC/Universal Motown.
9. “Put on,” Young Jeezy feat. Kanye West. CTE/Def Jam/IDJMG.
10. “The Boss,” Rick Ross feat. T-Pain. Slip-n-Slide/Def Jam/IDJMG.

Year-End Hot Dance Music

1. “Together,” Bob Sinclar & Steve Edwards. Yellow/Silver Label/Tommy Boy.
2. “Control Yourself,” Erin Hamilton. Fresh Music La.
3. “Turn It Up,” Mark Picchiotti Presents Basstoy. Blue-plate.
4. “The Boss,” Kristine W. Fly Again.
5. “Feedback,” Janet. Island/IDJMG.
6. “And I Try,” Bimbo Jones. Silver Label/Tommy Boy.
7. “Can You Feel That Sound,” Georgie Porgie. Music Plant.
8. “No, No, No,” Ono. Mind Train/Twisted.
9. “Give It All You Got,” Ultra Nate feat. Chris Willis. Silver Label/Tommy Boy.
10. “Kingdom,” Dave Gahan. Mute/Capitol.

Best selling classical albums of 2008

1. “Spirit of the Season,” Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square With Sissel. Mormon Tabernacle Choir.
2. “Chant: Music for the Soul,” the Cistercian Monks of Stift Heiligenkreuz. Decca/Universal Classics Group.
3. “Radio City Music Hall: Live in New York,” Andre Rieu. Denon/SLG

4. “Vivaldi: the Four Seasons,” Joshua Bell/Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Sony Classical/Sony BMG Masterworks.
5. “No Reservations.” Soundtrack. Decca/Universal Classics Group.
6. “The Magic of Lang Lang,” Lang Lang. DG/Universal Classics Group.
7. “Appassionato,” Yo-Yo Ma. Sony Classical/Sony BMG Masterworks.
8. “Bach: Goldberg Variations,” Simone Dinnerstein. Telarc.
9. “Maria,” Cecilia Bartoli. Decca/Universal Classics Group.
10. “New Impossibilities,” Yo-Yo Ma/the Silk Road Ensemble/Chicago Symphony Orchestra (Harth-Bedoya). Sony Classical/Sony BMG Masterworks.

Top soundtracks of 2008

1. Hannah Montana 2 (Soundtrack)/Meet Miley Cyrus
2. High School Musical 2
3. Mamma Mia!