

March 25, 2004

MEDIA MIX | A Quick Take on the Week's New

	TITLE	FROM	BASIC STORY	SAMPLE GRAB
CD	Damita Jo By Janet Jackson	Virgin Records \$19	The outrageous Ms. Jackson releases her first studio album in three years. 	"I wanna make it like a dream for you / Turn every fantasy into the truth / You know I'll take you anywhere that you wanna go right now." — "Just a Little While"
BOOK	Eleven Minutes By Paulo Coelho	Harper Collins \$25	The author of "The Alchemist" tells the exotic tale of a jaded Brazilian call girl—lured to Switzerland as a samba dancer—who falls for a world-weary painter.	"Eleven minutes. The world revolved around something that only took eleven minutes." — The narrator, Maria, muses on her bread and butter
GAME	Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life GameCube Rated Everyone	Natsume \$40	In this earnest yet addictive country-life simulator, you'll run a farm, woo local girls and grow old in a small rustic town. 	"Don't be so eager to say hi." — Hard-to-get Nami, one of your potential brides
CD	Honkin' on Bobo By Aerosmith	Columbia Records \$19	Stripping away its pop elements, the band returns to what it does best: bar-room boogie and blues standards. 	"It'll be a roadrunner wedding / But it can't be white." — "Roadrunner"
DVD	The House of Sand and Fog Rated R	Dream-Works \$27	A bureaucratic error propels a despondent woman (Jennifer Connelly) and a proud immigrant (Ben Kingsley) into a tragic struggle over a beachfront home.	"Today, God has kissed our eyes." — Behrani (Kingsley) announces the real estate purchase to his family
COMIC	Marvels: 10th Anniversary Edition By Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross	Marvel Comics \$50	The story of the Marvel universe told through the eyes of fictional photojournalist Phil Sheldon	"All I wanted to do was ... finish my book on the marvels before the bottom fell out." — Sheldon wonders whether super-beings are a good thing—or the end of the world
BOOK	Sayonara, Gangsters By Genichiro Takahashi	Vertical \$20	This romp through a future plagued by killers in Al Capone drag is also an inquiry into—and sendup of—the writer's creative process. 	"The man would gaze blankly ... at the poems I wrote, then sniff them and lick them and hold them up to the sun, and then ask me, 'Is this part with the writing the whole poem?'"
DVD	Something's Gotta Give Rated PG-13	Columbia TriStar \$30	A bachelor (Jack Nicholson) with an appetite for younger women meets his match in a feisty, divorced playwright (Diane Keaton) his own age.	"I've never seen a woman that age naked before." — An incredulous Harry (Nicholson) after seeing Erica (Keaton) in the buff
GAME	Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow Xbox, PC (PS2, GameCube out this summer) Rated Teen	Ubi Soft Entertainment \$50, PC \$40	Gaming's most realistic (and hunkiest) super-spy returns to rescue hostages at the American Embassy in East Timor. 	Sneak around as a stealthy spy or get under the helmet of a heavily armed mercenary and terminate the opposition in Pandora's unique multi-player mode.

By Shirley Halperin (CDs), Christopher Healy (games), Carolyn Juris

Releases

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE	WHAT YOU WON'T	GRADE
<p>Soulful, retro grooves paired with modern beats; Jackson's seductive voice on sexually charged songs; the pure pop of "My Baby," featuring hip-hop newcomer Kanye West</p>	<p>At 22 tracks (with five interludes), the CD is difficult to digest in one sitting. And parents should turn on their racy-dars.</p>	<p>B</p>
<p>Being swept up in the sensual, noir atmosphere of this brazen, for-adults-only fairy tale</p>	<p>Coelho occasionally forfeits his rich imagination in favor of clichés, likening, for example, life to a roller coaster.</p>	<p>B-</p>
<p>Ever wonder how big-eyed anime characters age? The 30-year time span allows you to follow your farmer through marriage, child-rearing and beyond.</p>	<p>The game may be a little too Zen for some; when you set up a produce stand, for example, you can spend minutes waiting for a customer to wander by.</p>	<p>B+</p>
<p>Stellar sound with just the right amount of dirt in all the corners (the bridge in "Baby Please Don't Go," the fuzzy tone of "Roadrunner")</p>	<p>The rockers hit their mark early on, but lackluster mid-tempo numbers lose the listener halfway through the album.</p>	<p>A-</p>
<p>The film doesn't take sides, but Kingsley's heart-rending, Oscar-nominated performance tips the balance.</p>	<p>The errant, lawless sheriff whose unforgivable actions set off a disastrous chain of events</p>	<p>A</p>
<p>Ross's breakthrough cinema verite art; new looks at sketchbooks and scripts; so many classic moments lovingly recast</p>	<p>Has it really been 10 years?</p>	<p>A</p>
<p>The novel's absurdities—Roman poet Virgil comes as a refrigerator—neatly balance its tender, humane depictions of love and loss.</p>	<p>Takahashi's copious literary references may leave you feeling woefully undereducated.</p>	<p>B+</p>
<p>Keaton is so effervescent, she even elicits warm charm from Keanu Reeves.</p>	<p>Though it's 30 minutes too long, the film still manages to under-use Frances McDormand, Jon Favreau and Paul Michael Glaser.</p>	<p>B+</p>
<p>New environments such as lush, steamy jungles and speeding train cars; new moves such as upside-down sniper attacks</p>	<p>The nerve-racking difficulty and demand for hair-splitting precision can be wearying.</p>	<p>A-</p>

(books), Evan Narcisse (games), Chris J. Petropoulos (comics), Anne Phelps (DVDs), Eugena Pilek (books)