

# CD Reviews BY NOODLE D

## New Artist



**Amelia Ray: *On***  
**GENRE: FOLK-ROCK**

Folk-rock vocalist Amelia Ray captures her audience each time she takes the stage for a live performance. Although known for her solo acoustic performances, she travels with her band The Conjugal Experiment and has shared the stage with notable performers such as Chuck Rainey, Elliot Randall and Kenny Aronoff.

Originally from San Jose, California, Ray moved to Madrid a couple of years ago, where she is now legally married to a female artist. There Ray formed her own recording studio, Out of 3 Sigma Studios, and created her seventh and newest CD, *On*. *On* is a compilation of 10 tracks (including a surprising cover of an Otis Redding song) in which Ray plays all guitars, some bass and takes the lead on all vocals.

Ray is known for her eclectic musical creations, belting out an assortment of rock, jazz, country, gospel, pop and blues. "At the root, I'm always trying to make good, ol' finger-snapping music that makes you perk up your ears and move your feet," she says.

Influenced by such artists as Steely Dan and Led Zeppelin, Ray has tapped into a variety of melodies and infused them with political and social themes. One of her successes is her anti-Bush song "Whos'yerdaddy?"—which scored a position on the American Idol Underground Top 40 chart and reached number one on Neil Young's *Living With War* charts.

*On* may be purchased online through iTunes, CDbaby.com or on Ray's Web site at [www.ameliaray.net](http://www.ameliaray.net).

1



**PRIDE '08**  
**GENRE: DANCE**

This 12-song compilation is mastered by one of New York's legendary mixers, DJ Max Rodriguez. We love Rodriguez for his fine work at New York's Pride festivals, but he's just as well known for shaking a whole lot of New York City booty back in the day at Limelight, the Palladium and The Roxy. *Pride '08* features seven remixes from songs that reached *Billboard's* number one position, including songs from Madonna, Justin Timberlake and The Fray. "Bleeding Love," "4 Minutes" and "Fine Day" stand out—highly recommended for a good gym workout.

2



**NIKKA COSTA: PEBBLE TO A PEARL**  
**GENRE: SOUL**

Nikka Costa is known for *Everybody's Got Their Something*, a 2001 smash that's still one of our iPod favorites. She's got a new band, and her newest CD has a slightly different flavor, but it's still a winner. "Can't Please Everybody," "Bullets in the Sky" and the ballad "Someone for Everyone" are excellent tracks.

3



**LP: SUBURBAN SPRAWL & ALCOHOL**  
**GENRE: ROCK**

This woman belts out rock vocals so powerful that our headphone earbuds keep vibrating out of our ears! A cross between Evanescence and Joan Jett, L.P.'s third album shows off two excellent songs that will surely please your eardrums, "Good With You" and "Cling to Me."

4



**ANI DIFRANCO: RED LETTER YEAR**  
**GENRE: ROCK**

In case you were wondering what ever happened to Ani DiFranco, we are happy to report that she is back—and presenting us with her newest creation. The new CD celebrates existence, professes love and tackles politics, all while reflecting on her place in life as a new mother with warmth and clarity. DiFranco shines on tracks like "Way Tight," "Emancipated Minor" and "Red Letter Year."

5



**DELTA GOODREM: DELTA**  
**GENRE: POP**

Delta Goodrem has made her mark in Australia and now, at 23 years of age and a history of successful albums in her country, she recently hit U.S. shores with her new, slightly Celine Dion—esque CD. "Believe Again" is a great track, but our favorite belongs to the edgier "In This Life," produced by Melissa Etheridge's former guitarist, John Shanks.



PHOTOS: ANGIOLA BONANNI