

# *Doolittle*-by The Pixies



Album Review by: Ryan Stewart

After their debut album, the Pixies were looking for commercial success, something they couldn't seem to achieve with "Surfer Rosa". That's just what they did with their second full length, 15 song LP, "Doolittle". It was recorded in October and November 1988 at Downtown Recorders in Boston and at Carriage House Studios in Stamford, Connecticut.

NME writers ranked it the second best album of all time in 2003 and Rolling Stone put it at #226 on its Top 500 Albums of All Time list.

The Pixies had a budget of \$40,000 excluding producer fees. That may not seem like a whole lot for a major label, but it was four times what they were allowed to spend on their first album. Their producer wanted to make some songs longer; a lot of the songs on the album are around two minutes in length. The lead singer Black Francis took the producer to a record store and handed him "Buddy Holly's Greatest Hits", where most of the songs are around 2 minutes, and said "If it's good enough for Buddy Holly...", and the songs stayed nice and short, just like the band wanted.

References to surrealism, biblical violence, torture and death make it their darkest album, at least in terms of subject matter. "Debaser" has references to surrealism, while "Mr. Grieves",

"Tame", and "Hey" are all about women and whores. There are biblical analogies in "Dead" and "Gouge Away".

["Debaser"](#) is the album's opening track and it sure makes it clear that the Pixies aren't messing around. With it's fast paced drum beat, distorted guitar and strained vocals, it really sets a tone for the rest of the album. ["Here Comes Your Man"](#) is not nearly as edgy, but just as memorable. The second single shows a slightly softer side of the Pixies. Acoustic guitar and mellow vocals show diversity from the album's opener. ["Monkey Gone to Heaven"](#) is even more mellow than "Here Comes Your Man". The album's first single displays a melancholy cello and vocal harmonies, but also has some signature screaming in the bridge. ["Gouge Away"](#) has soft, almost whispered vocals in the chorus, but more screaming in the chorus. Nirvana also used this loud-quiet-loud effect quite a lot.

AllMusic, Blender, Chicago Tribune, Drowned in Sound, NME, Pitchfork Media and Rolling Stone all gave the album 5/5, 10/10 or 4/4 stars respectively; full marks. The Pixies finally also achieved commercial success, over 1 million copies have been sold, making it platinum in the US and UK and gold in Canada.

The Pixies are a very original band and they are not as popular or well-known as they should be. I recommend giving this album a listen to anyone who likes 90's music like Nirvana or



anyone looking for a good listen.