

Put 'Volume 3' on your shopping list

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We are lucky to have the Traveling Wilburys around.

With their second album, incongruously titled *Volume 3*, the Wilburys have once again assembled a fine collection of amusing ditties with refreshingly off-hand lyrics.

The Wilburys have chosen to remain a quartet for this album, and have created new Wilbury identities for themselves — "Spike" (George Harrison), "Muddy" (Tom Petty), "Clayton" (Jeff Lynne) and "Boo" (Bob Dylan).

Volume 3 opens with "She's My Baby," the rockiest song yet by the Wilburys and the first single from the album. Each of the Wilburys sings, but Dylan makes the biggest impression with his verse: "She can build a boat. She can make it float/ She can play my guitar note for note/ She loves to stick her tongue right down my throat/ She's my baby."

With the tragic loss of Roy Orbison, the only distinctive voices left in the Traveling

Wilburys are Dylan's and Petty's.

Dylan plays a much bigger role on this release than he did on the first Traveling Wilburys record — he is featured on eight of the album's 11 selections.

In fact, hearing Dylan's distinctive voice in the radically different context of the Wilburys' music is one of the greatest pleasures of this album. A good example is "7 Deadly Sins." The song is basically a traditional '50s doo-wop song in the style of "The Ten Commandments of Love." The entrance of Dylan's scuzzy voice rather than the velvety tones of Dion or Frankie Lyman is a rather ear-catching experience.

The other candidate for MWV (Most Valuable Wilbury) is Petty. Petty contributes to two of the album's most likable tracks, the neo-bluegrass "Poor House" and a very funny blues number entitled "Cool Dry Place." The latter also is a cautionary tale for the '90s. Petty warns: "Some places they get mildew/ And others get too hot/ Some places are so damp that everything you got just rots," before advising "Store it in a cool, dry place."

The album, however, is not flawless.

"The Devil's Been Busy" is a somewhat misguided attempt to deal with environmental issues. Harrison also offers a wimpy track that sounds like a reject from the *Cloud Nine* sessions. "You Took My Breath Away" is simply a mediocre Harrison ballad with slightly quirky lyrics.

Harrison's relative disappearance on *Volume 3* certainly is disappointing. The recent revitalization of his career caught Harrison at a creative peak on *Volume 1*. Even a song as funny as "End of the Line" had the depth earned from hard experience. Harrison's contributions on songs like "You Took My Breath Away" and "Inside Out" return to the boring, overly earnest style that marred much of his pre-Wilburys work.

A more serious drawback is the performance of Lynne. His limited singing and songwriting abilities add little to the project. Even worse, his slick production style is the antithesis of the Wilburys' unpretentious, casual music.

Still, it is difficult to be critical in light of Petty and Dylan's sheer joy at being

Wilburys. When Dylan exclaims "you, you, yah you hoo whoo" in "New Blue Moon" the music more than makes up for Lynne's third-rate Phil Spector imitation.

Only the hardest hearted listener could fail to be delighted by the album's final track, "The Wilbury Twist," as Petty sings, "Put your hands on your head/ Put your feet in the air/ Then you hop around the room. In your underwear."

The overall concept of the Traveling Wilburys is so appealing that the record succeeds mightily despite its flaws. The opportunity to hear these legends of rock being relaxed, goofy and even slightly raunchy is a rare treat. The album title, the Wilbury monikers and the hilarious packaging — including step-by-step Wilbury Twist instructions — just add to the fun.

In the final analysis, it seems best to agree with "Professor Tiny Hampton" of the album's liner notes when he calls *Volume 3* "a satisfactory auricular experience for the hedonistic gratification of the hoi-polloi."

Here's hoping for a Volume 5.



Tom Petty reflects on his close personal friend, musician Muddy Wilbury featured on "Volume 3", the Traveling Wilburys' latest album