

FLORIDIAN

SECTION
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the power of one



New CDs by rocker Tom Petty, crooner Raul Malo and hip-hopper Pharrell prove you can step out on your own, and step up your game.

By SEAN DALY
Times Pop Music Critic

Breaking the band.
Ditching your mates.
D.I.Y., baby.
In the perilous world of popular music, there isn't a riskier career move than leaving your day job and going solo, be it for one record or the rest of your cursed career.

More often than not, the sum of the band (say, Van Halen) will always be far greater than the big fat ego (ouch, David Lee Roth). For every Sting smartly skipping out on the Police, there are hundreds of mulleted Steve Perrys flaking out on Journey. For every Lionel Richie wisely cutting out on the Commodores, there's Ozzy Osbourne besottedly biting the head off of Black Sabbath.

Even when the escape artist is one of the greatest songwriters in history, he or she is inevitably unable to match the collective oomph of the posse.

EXHIBIT A: the Beatles.
John, Paul, George and Ringo remain the most formidable pop quartet in anybody's record collection. And although each Fab (well, three Fabs at least) made enduring solo music, no one's ever going to mistake McCartney's *Pipes of Peace* for *Abbey Road*.

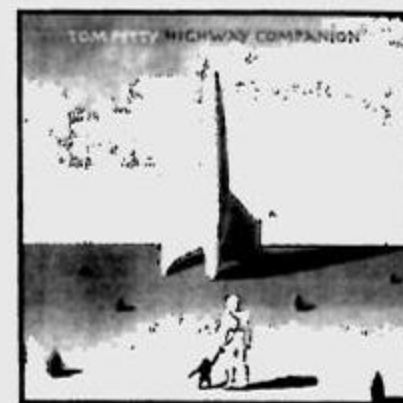
Same goes for the Rolling Stones. Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Charlie Watts and Ron Wood: Each Hall of Famer made music on his own. And you know what? A lone Stone usually rolls right into the discount bin.

Bandmates keep egos in check and aren't afraid to say an idea stinks. It's safety, and *sanity*, in numbers.

But every once in a while, that rare artist blows the pop stand and still manages to make the best music of his career. Not only did the artist have something to say, but that something turned out

Please see **ONE 4E**

CD REVIEWS



Tom Petty, *Highway Companion* (American) **GRADE: A**



Raul Malo, *You're Only Lonely* (Sanctuary) **GRADE: A**



Pharrell, *In My Mind* (Star Trak/Interscope) **GRADE: B+**

One from 1E

to be poignant, fun, formidable. He turned his alone-in-the-world vulnerability into a strength.

Simply: *He was better off on his own.*
And that, my friends, leads us to the three men who today are releasing spectacular "solo" albums that won't make anyone miss "the other guys":

Iconic rocker Tom Petty, sans the Heartbreakers.

Cuban-American crooner Raul Malo, minus the Mavericks.

And hip-hop savant Pharrell, with nary a N.E.R.D. or a Neptune in sight.

The 55-year-old Petty, the pride of Gainesville, is the most interesting case. There's no denying the 30 years of work he has done with such Heartbreakers as guitarist Mike Campbell and keyboardist Benmont Tench. As a fully functioning unit, T.P. and his loyal marauders have jangled out dozens of rousing garage rock anthems: *American Girl*, *Refugee*, *Even the Losers*, and so on.

But the truth is that Petty's best album is the one without the Heartbreakers credited on the cover: 1989's *Full Moon Fever*, his first "solo" album. Gone were the anthems written for a big sprawling band. In their place were quirky, catchy pop gems Petty made simply for himself: *Free Fallin'*, *Depending on You*, *The Apartment Song*. It's a cerebral album, a small album. It's also nothing less than a masterpiece.

So it gives me a great thrill to announce that the new *Highway Companion*, 12 tracks all written by Petty and Petty alone, is very much a bouncy, brilliant sequel to *Full Moon Fever*. Heartbreaker Campbell adds some licks here and there, but his presence is merely cosmetic. This is T.P.'s time.

Highway Companion, with its dark running theme about losing your sense of self, would be an incredibly depressing album if it weren't for all the grinning touches Petty and producer Jeff Lynne toss into the mix. (ELO mastermind Lynne, Petty's buddy from the Traveling Wilburys, also produced *Full Moon Fever*, and he has a puckish ear for sonic silliness.)

On the 9-to-5er lament *Big Weekend*, about depending on two-for-one happy hours to shake the rust from your psyche, the sing-along chorus is infused with big, exaggerated drums and a greasy slick of slide guitar. Petty knows your barroom blues, folks.

First single *Saving Grace* is built on a sinister roadhouse guitar chug and a round-midnight bass line. With the Heartbreakers, the song would have inevitably taken off like a rocket. But by himself, Petty keeps the song ominous and contained, as he creeps down a dark, lonely road,

his eyes darting left and right. With that classic whiny drawl, he sings, "And it's hard to say, who you are these days. But you run on anyway, don't you baby?"

An aging femme fatale, perhaps someone who shattered Tom's heart, is lambasted in *Flirting With Time*; "Time is catching up with you," he warns. But Petty concocts such a glorious Byrdian chorus that the track is as much about the cleansing power of pop as it is about evil women.

As good as those cuts are, however, the album's best track is the strummy, midtempo *Down South*, a bittersweet breeze in which Petty realizes that it was so much easier way back when. Perhaps the song is a response to his previous album, the acerbically unlikable *The Last DJ*, in which Petty raged against fame and the record industry. Whatever the case, *Down South* is injected with a *c'est la vie* defeatism and sly, hopeful humor. It's an instant Petty classic.

Welcome back, Tom.

Born with one of the smoothest, warmest voices in popular music, Raul Malo is a classic "phonebook singer," a husky, hirsute 40-year-old who could croon the Yellow Pages and have you weeping by the time he gets to Air Conditioning Contractors.

His regular band, the Miami-born Mavericks, started in 1989 as a country outfit but soon proved capable of rock, blues, swing and danceable Latin pop. The lusty Mavericks fed Malo's party guy side, and although his voice was always front and center (especially on their definitive cover of the Hollies' *The Air That I Breathe*), you also got the feeling he was holding back for the sake of the group.

Not anymore.
The 12-track *You're Only Lonely*, the best make-out album of the year, is a mostly covers collection whose sole function is to show off Malo's all-world pipes. The album art and the quiet musical vibe hark back to '60s cocktail cool and conversation pits. This is music for lovers only.

These days, record stores are clogged with cover albums — many by that hack Rod Stewart — but Malo's disc is unmistakably original. He puts such heartbreaking spin on J.D. Souther's *You're Only Lonely* ("When the world is ready to fall on your little shoulders") and Etta James' version of *At Last*, it's as if you're hearing them for the first time. On Willie Nelson's *Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground*, Malo invites some powerhouse gospel mavens to join him, but that's mainly to make his vocal derring-do even more impressive.

Two versions of Randy Newman's heart-wrenching *Feels Like Home* appear on *You're Only Lonely*: One Malo performs alone, the other

a duet with country darling Martina McBride. Both renditions are sublime, but I flinch at the idea of boozy karaoke couples butchering the duet for years to come. After all, some songs are for listening purposes only.

Well, it's about time.
Virginia Beach's Pharrell has been pushing back the release date of his solo debut, *In My Mind*, for what seems like an eternity. Without the presence of Chad Hugo, his partner in both the producing Neptunes and the band N.E.R.D., the 33-year-old hip-hop star tinkered incessantly with the 14-track album, which he wrote and produced almost entirely on his own, an unheard-of feat in today's pop world.

Pharrell is a unique guy for sure. As a producer, he has crafted smash hits for such disparate acts as Snoop Dogg (*Drop It Like It's Hot*), Justin Timberlake (*Senorita*), Gwen Stefani (*Hollaback Girl*) and Nelly (*Hot in Herre*). He has cooed his street-smart falsetto on hits by Jay-Z, Busta Rhymes and P. Diddy. And on N.E.R.D.'s two hit albums, Pharrell and his mates mixed rap, rock, soul and pop, successfully indulging in a kitchen sink aesthetic.

As a way of thanking Pharrell, all manner of high-powered guests show up to cameo on *In My Mind*, but there's never any doubt who's driving this hot rod. Almost every track is produced and layered for maximum hit potential. The consistently inventive album is a bit bloated at 14 tracks, but you can't fault Pharrell for having too many good ideas.

Stefani flirts out the hook on opener *Can I Have It Like That*, an attitudinal wonder of jazzbo drums, soul horns and a looping bass line that sounds like cop show chase music. "It's so unfair, it's so unreasonable," Kanye West hypes on his duet with Pharrell, the mad-grinning *Number One*, as both men brag about their skills over circa *Off the Wall* synth washes.

And then there's the song everyone will be talking about: A rattlesnake guitar line and hip-thrusting drums signal the start of the profanely funky *Baby*, a Prince homage featuring the always randy Nelly.

In My Mind, whose main theme is sex and lots of it, is destined for club-classic status; it's an endlessly smart, entertaining album from one of the most promising voices in pop music. N.E.R.D. fans might want their guy to come back to the pack, but here's the truth:

Like fellow solo men Petty and Malo, Pharrell is better off as a one-man band.

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Movies from 2E

You Me and Dupree (PG-13) (Open captioned) 2:35, 10:35.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:20, 2:50, 5:25, 8:10, 10:30.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 11:45, 12:15, 12:45, 1:30, 3:15, 3:45, 4:15, 5, 6:45, 7:15, 7:45, 8:30, 10:15.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 1:20, 4:05, 7:35, 10:05.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 12:05, 3:30, 7, 10:25.
Click (PG-13) 1:05, 4:25, 7:10, 9:40.
Nacho Libre (PG) 9:45.
Cars (G) 12:25, 4, 7:05.
Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron (G) 10 a.m.
Shrek 2 (PG) 10 a.m.

SEMINOLE
SEMINOLE 8, (727) 320-0977
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 1, 4:10, 7:15, 10:10.
Little Man (PG-13) 1:15, 5:15, 7:50, 10:15.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 1:10, 4:30, 7:45.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 12:15, 2:35, 5:05, 7:35, 10:05.
Cars (G) 2, 4:40, 7:20, 9:50.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 12:45, 4:45, 7:30, 9:55.
Monster House (PG) 12:20, 2:30, 5, 7:25, 9:45.
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:30, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10.

ST. PETERSBURG
BAYWALK 20, (727) 502-0965
3D Monster House (PG) 11:30, 2, 4:30, 7:05, 9:30.
Clerks II (R) 12:10, 2:35, 5:05, 7:35, 10:05.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 11:30, 12:30, 2:05, 3:05, 4:40, 5:40, 7:15, 8:15, 10, 10:40.
Monster House (PG) 12:30, 1, 3, 3:30, 5:30, 6:05, 7:55, 8:30, 10:30, 10:35.
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:10, 12:40, 2:30, 3:10, 4:55, 5:35, 7:25, 8, 9:50, 10:25.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:15, 12:35, 2:40, 2:50, 4:55, 5:35, 7:30, 8:15, 10, 10:40.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 11:05, 11:40, 1:45, 2:25, 4:25, 5:05, 7:10, 7:45, 9:45.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 11:45, 12:45, 1:20, 3:25, 4:25, 5, 6:35, 7:05, 8:05, 8:40, 10:05, 10:35.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 11:15, 1:50, 4:30, 7, 9:35.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 11, noon, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 6:05, 7, 8, 9:45, 10:30.
Click (PG-13) 11:05, 5.
Fast and the Furious (PG-13) 10:25 p.m.
Cars (G) 12:05, 3:15.

TYRONE 6, (727) 347-9777
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 12, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30.
Monster House (PG) 12:45, 3, 5:20, 7:40, 10.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:25, 2:40, 5, 7:30, 9:50.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 12:50, 3:20, 5:45, 8:15, 10:40.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 12:15, 3:30, 7, 10:10.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 12:35, 3:10, 5:35, 8:10, 10:35.

BEACH THEATRE, (727) 360-6697
Prairie Home Companion (PG-13) 1:20, 6:50.
Keeping Up with the Steins (NR) 3:40, 8:10.
PASCO
DADE CITY
JOY-LAN DRIVE IN, (352) 567-5085
No screening today.
PORT RICHEY
CINEMA GRILL at Embassy Six, (727) 848-4424
Mission: Impossible III (PG-13) 1:10, 5:35.
Over the Hedge (PG) 1:10, 3:15, 5:25, 8:10, 10:15.
RV (PG) 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 7:55.
Scary Movie 4 (PG-13) 3:45, 8:10.
Poseidon (PG-13) 1:15, 5:35.
X-Men (PG-13) 3:25, 7:45.
Garfield (PG) 1:15, 3:10, 5:25, 7:45.
Break-Up (PG-13) 1:10, 3:25, 5:45, 8.

PORT RICHEY HOLLYWOOD 18, (727) 862-9490
Clerks II (R) 12:40, 3, 5:25, 8, 10:25.
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:05, 2:35, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 11:50, 12:50, 2:25, 3:30, 5, 7:20, 7:50, 10:05, 10:35.
Monster House (PG) 11:45, 12:15, 2:10, 2:40, 4:35, 5:05, 7, 7:30, 9:25, 9:55.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 11:40, 12:10, 2:15, 2:45, 4:50, 5:20, 7:25, 7:55, 10:10, 10:40.
Little Man (PG-13) 11:55, 12:25, 2:30, 4, 5:15, 7:10, 7:40, 9:30, 10.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 11:30, noon, 12:30, 1, 2:50, 3:20, 3:50, 4:20, 6:15, 6:45, 7:15, 7:45, 10:15, 10:45.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 11:35, 2:20, 4:55, 7:35, 10:20.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 12:20, 3:35, 7, 10:35.
Click (PG-13) 12:35, 3:25, 6:55, 9:35.
Cars (G) 10, 12:45, 3:40, 7:05, 9:50.

ZEPHYRHILLS
CINEMA 10, (813) 782-2222
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45.
Monster House (PG) 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30.
Clerks II (R) 2:30, 4:30, 7, 9:30.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45, 9:45.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45.
Inconvenient Truth (PG) 4:45 p.m.
Little Man (PG) 2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 2, 7, 9:45.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 2, 7, 9:45.
Click (PG-13) 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45.
Cars (G) 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30.
HOME THEATRE, (813) 782-8282
Prairie Home Companion (PG-13) 7:15.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 7:15.

HERNANDO
BROOKSVILLE
ZOTA BEACON 10, (352) 592-1001
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 12:30, 3:40, 7, 9:20, 10, midnight.

Lady in the Water (PG-13) 12:20, 2:40, 5, 7:25, 10:10.
Click (PG-13) noon, 4:50, 9:30.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 2:20, 7:10.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:50, 3, 5:15, 7:35, 9:45.
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:35, 2:45, 5:10, 7:45, 9:55.
Monster House (PG) 12:45, 2:50, 4:55, 7:05, 9:15.
Clerks II (R) 12:40, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 10:05.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 12:15, 3:30, 6:40, 9:50.
Cars (G) 11:20, 1:50, 4:20, 6:50.

SPRING HILL
SPRING HILL 8, (352) 680-5661
Cars (G) 12:40, 3:50.
Click (PG-13) 12:55, 4:15, 7:05, 9:45.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 12:45, 4, 7:20, 10:15.
Fast and the Furious (PG-13) 7:15, 9:50.
Garfield (PG) 1:10.
Nacho Libre (PG) 7:30, 10.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG) 12:30, 1:45, 3:45, 5, 7, 9:30, 10:15.
Prairie Home Companion (PG-13) 12:50, 3:45, 6:45, 9:45.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 3:30, 6:45, 10:10.
Word Play (PG) 1, 3:55, 7:10, 9:50.

CITRUS
INVERNESS
CITRUS CINEMAS, (352) 637-3388
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) noon, 2:30, 5, 8, 10:30.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 12:45, 3:45, 7:45, 10:40.
Monster House (PG) 12:15, 2:40, 5:05, 7:30, 9:55.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 12:50, 4:10, 7:40, 10:25.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 12:30, 4, 7:20, 10:45.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 3:50, 10:20.
Click (PG-13) 12:40, 7:15.

CRYSTAL RIVER
CRYSTAL RIVER MALL 9, (352) 564-6864
Clerks II (R) 12:30, 2:45, 5:15, 7:40, 10.
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 11:55, 2:25, 4:45, 7:20, 10:10.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) noon, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:20.
Monster House (PG) 12:15, 2:40, 5:05, 7:30, 9:55.
Little Man (PG-13) 11:50, 2:15, 4:40, 7, 9:45.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 11:45, 2:20, 5, 8, 10:25.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 12:20, 12:50, 3:45, 4:15, 7:15, 7:45, 10:30.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 12:45, 7:10.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 4, 9:50.

MARION
OCALA
OCALA HOLLYWOOD 16, (352) 861-2699
Clerks II (R) 12:50, 3:15, 5:30, 7:50, 10:30.
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:10, 2:35, 4:55, 7:15, 9:35.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 11:55, 2, 2:30, 4:35, 5:10, 7:10, 7:40, 9:45, 10:15.
Monster House (PG) 12:15, 2:40, 5:05, 7:30, 9:55.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 11:50, 12:20, 12:40, 1:20, 3:10, 3:40, 4, 4:40, 6:30, 7, 7:20, 8, 9:50, 10:20, 10:40.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 11:45, 2:20, 4:30, 5, 7:35, 9:40, 10:10.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:55, 3:20, 5:40, 8:10, 10:45.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) noon, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:35.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 11:40, 3:35, 6:50, 10:25.
Click (PG-13) 12:05, 2:55, 4:50, 7:25, 10.
Cars (G) 1:15, 4:05, 6:55, 10:05.
Inconvenient Truth (PG) 1:55, 7:05.
Shrek 2 (PG) 10 a.m.
Curious George (G) 10 a.m.

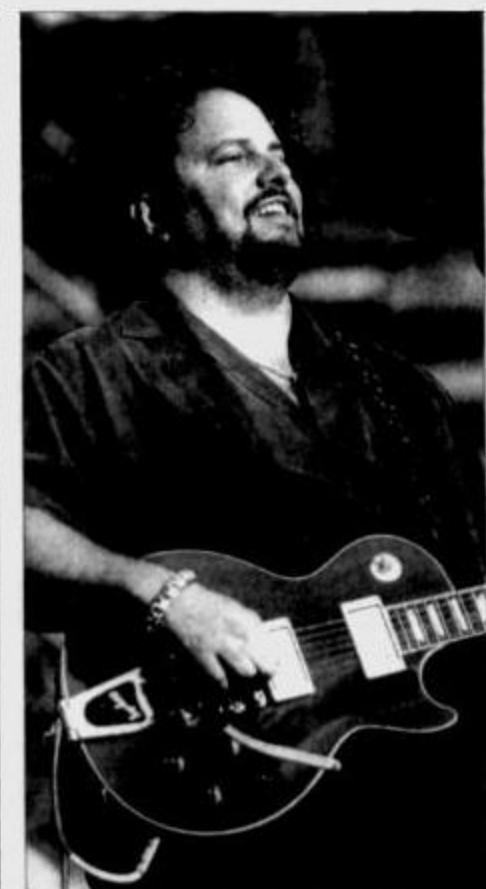
MANATEE
BRADENTON
DOLLAR MOVIES at DESOTO SQUARE, (941) 744-2950
RV (PG) 12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:50, 9:10.
X-Men (PG-13) 12:30, 2:45, 5, 7:15, 9:30.
Omen (R) 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 7, 9:20.
Mission: Impossible III (PG-13) 12:15, 4:45, 9:30.
Stuck II (PG-13) 2:40, 7:25.
Ice Age (PG) 12:25, 4:20, 8:10.
Hoot (PG) 2:20, 6:10.
Wild (G) noon, 2:15, 6, 8.
Scary Movie 4 (PG-13) 4:10, 9:45.

OAKMONT 8, (941) 954-5768
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:15, 2:40, 5, 7:50, 10:20.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) 12:40, 4:10, 7:40, 10:25.
Monster House (PG) 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 8, 10:15.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:45, 10.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 12:50, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) noon, 3:30, 4, 7, 7:30, 10:30.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 12:45, 4:20, 7:10, 10:05.
Superman Returns (PG-13) 12:05.

ROYAL PALM 20, (941) 727-7469
My Super Ex-Girlfriend (PG-13) 12:50, 3, 5:10, 7:25, 9:45.
Clerks II (R) 12:15, 2:25, 4:40, 7, 9:30.
Monster House (PG) 12:30, 1, 1:30, 2:50, 3:15, 4, 5:10, 5:30, 7, 7:20, 7:45, 9:20, 9:40, 9:55.
Lady in the Water (PG-13) noon, 12:45, 2:30, 3:15, 5, 5:45, 7:30, 8:15, 10.
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (PG-13) 11:30, noon, 12:30, 1:45, 2:40, 3:15, 3:40, 5, 5:50, 6:30, 7, 9, 9:45, 10:10.
Little Man (PG-13) 12:30, 1, 2:50, 3:20, 5:10, 5:40, 7:30, 8, 9:55, 10:15.
You, Me and Dupree (PG-13) 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:30.
Superman Returns (PG-13) noon, 3:15, 6:30, 9:45.
Devil Wears Prada (PG-13) 1, 3:25, 5:50, 8:15, 10:40.
Click (PG-13) 1:30, 4:15, 7:10, 9:30.
Cars (G) 1, 4, 7, 9:40.
Lake House (PG) 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 9:40.
Nacho Libre (PG) 12:50, 3:10, 5:20, 7:40, 10.
Over the Hedge (PG) 1:45, 6:45.
Waist Deep (R) 4, 9:30.



There's no denying that Tom Petty and his Heartbreakers have put out 30 years of great garage rock. But his best work has come when he has stepped out alone.



It doesn't much matter what Raul Malo sings, as long as he's singing something. He shows off his silky pipes on *You're Only Lonely*, working without his Mavericks.



Pharrell wrote and produced his new album, *In My Mind*, almost entirely on his own, an unheard-of feat in pop music.

Getty Images photos