

RECOMMENDED CHRISTIAN-LABEL ARTISTS & BANDS OF A SPECIFIC MUSICAL GENRE

In compiling this list I realize that some artists/bands mainly perform one particular style of music and other artists perform across several musical styles or genres. I have therefore endeavored to be as specific as possible and name particular albums of the artist/band that, in my view, are outstanding in a particular musical genre.

NB. 'v.s.' stands for 'vocal similarities'
'm.s.' stands for 'musical similarities'

Adult Contemporary/Pop

Bob Carlisle – what a voice!

John Elefante – brilliant vocalist (formerly with Kansas)

Jon Gibson – the closest CCM gets to Stevie Wonder ('Body & Soul' & 'Love Education' CDs highly recommended)

Amy Grant – esp. her 'Lead Me On' & 'Behind The Eyes' CD's

Paul Q-Pek: 'Touch The Ground' CD (v.s. to Peter Gabriel at times)

Connie Scott: 'Live To Tell' (her strongest effort)

Michael W. Smith: esp. his 'The Big Picture' CD (his *magnum opus* – contains great keyboard work)

Out Of The Grey – quality 'art pop' if there is such a genre (great female vocals and guitar work)

2nd Chapter Of Acts – the pioneer of multi-vocal groups (they harmonized well without sounding 'sugary/syrupy')

Sheila Walsh – esp. her 'Shadowlands' CD (excellent)

Roma Waterman – she possesses the voice range of England's Kate Bush (with v.s. at times); one of Australia's best female vocalists

Alternative/Indie/Modern Rock

Adam Again – anything by them, but esp. their 'Homeboys' CD

ApologetiX: 'Ticked' CD (a brilliant re-working [parodies] of well-known mainstream alternative/indie songs)

Battered Fish – esp. the 'Modern' CD (brilliant!)

The Choir – anything by them ('Chase The Kangaroo' & 'Circle Slide' CD's are absolute alternative gems)

Dear Ephesus: 'The Absent Sounds Of Me' CD (brilliant emo!)

Dumpster: 'See Through Me' & 'sky-fi' CD's

Henrys, The: 'She's My Hallelujah' EP (brilliant and oh-so-laid-back, leaving you wanting for more)

Michael Knott – esp. the 'Rocket And A Bomb' & 'Strip Cycle' CD's (the godfather of Christian alternative – what more can I say?!)

Leo Nine – formerly known as 'Battered Fish'

Luxury: 'Amazing And Thankyou' CD (the closest CCM gets to The Smiths & Morrissey)

Prayer Chain, The: esp. the 'Shawl' CD (a classic)

Rhubarb: 'Kamikaze' & 'Slow Motion' CD's (brilliant!)

Sal Paradise

Starflyer 59 – anything by them, but esp. their 'Fashion Focus' & 'Everybody Makes Mistakes' CD's (one of my all-time favourite indie bands - period!)

Steve Taylor – ‘I Predict 1990’ CD or anything else by him (considered by many to be one of the founding fathers of Christian alternative music)

Alternative/Art Pop

Bon Voyage – self-titled CD (Jason Martin’s [of Starflyer 59] side project) (Jason’s wife has one of the sexiest voices in CCM with a great, dreamy musical backing)

Jars of Clay – anything by them (very distinctive sound)

Marianne Kesler – her ‘Green Room’ & ‘Pear in the Pink Thing’ CDs are outstanding works of musical minimalism (intelligent pop not unlike Jewel)

Sixpence None The Richer

Ambient/Celtic

Maire Brennan – Enya’s older sister, is (or was) in Clannad

Eden’s Bridge – mainly perform worship music in a convincing celtic style (the closest to Iona that I know of)

Iona – anything by them

Jeff Johnson – a master composer of ambient music

Vanessa Renee – check out her debut CD (her voice truly soars)

Rosemary Sutton – ‘It’s Not Mozart ...’ (quality piano instrumentals with a hint of Enya)

Michelle Tumes – esp. the ‘Listen’ & ‘Centre of My Universe’ CD’s

Blues

Glenn Kaiser (Band) – anything by him/them

Kaiser/Mansfield – a great blues collaboration

Darrell Mansfield – a great singer and one of the greatest blues harpists

Mansfield/Turner: ‘Blues With A Feelin’

Larry Norman: ‘Something New Under The Son’ CD (contains some very tasty blues music indeed)

Tone Rangers: ‘Split the Sky’ EP

Children’s Music

Colin Buchanan

Chris Jaensch

Country

Susan Ashton

Ashton/Becker/Dente: ‘Along The Road’ CD (an excellent collaboration that contains some country pop/rock)

Steve Grace – esp. the ‘Liberty Road’ CD (country rock with an Australian character/spirit)

Ken Holloway: ‘The Ordinary’ CD

Jane Saunders: ‘Poetic Justice’ CD (brilliant)

Eclectic (music of various styles)

Havalina Rail Co.

Electronica

Mad At The World: ‘Mad At The World’ CD (in the tradition of Depeche Mode)

Folk Pop/Rock

Claire Hazzard – especially the last CD she released ‘The Spectacular Thing’

Marianne Kesler – especially her ‘Canopy of Blue’ & ‘Long Road Home’ CD’s (the latter is in my opinion a masterpiece)

Lost Dogs – a kind of Christian alternative/folky Traveling Wilburys

Geoff Rankin: ‘The Sacred Hill’ CD

6across

Grunge

Applehead: ‘Meaning’ (brilliant side project from The Crucified’s guitarist Greg Minier)

Grammatrain: ‘Lonely House’ CD (grunge at its best – on a par with Nirvana)

Rob Walker – formerly of hardcore/grunge outfit Wish for Eden (check out his ‘Strobe’ CD)

Hard Music/Heavy Rock/Metal

Alice Cooper – his ‘The Last Temptation’ concept CD is nothing short of brilliant

Barren Cross – one of my all-time favourite hard ‘n’ heavy bands, be they Christian or mainstream
- anything by them (their ‘State Of Control’ CD is IMHO their *magnum opus*)

- Mike Lee’s killer vocals are on a par with Bruce Dickinson

Believer – brilliant technical thrash band on a par with Kreator

- their ‘Extraction From Mortality’ & ‘Sanity Obscure’ CDs highly recommended

David Benson – the closest I’ve ever heard to Ozzy Osbourne/Black Sabbath

Bride – anything by them but esp. their ‘Kinetic Faith’ & ‘Snakes In The Playground’ CD’s

The Crucified – pioneers of Christian hardcore

Deliverance – one of the best Christian speed metal bands (check out their self-titled & ‘Weapons of our Warfare’ CD’s)

Die Happy – arising out of the ashes of Vengeance (Rising) – a must-have if you’re into Deep Purple

Legend – their self-titled CD is an example of some very tasty arena/stadium hard rock

Mad At The World – their ‘Seasons of Love’ CD has a The Cult vibe to it

Magdallan – check out ‘Big Bang’ if you’re into commercial metal that has big hooks

Mortal – pioneers of the industrial sound (their ‘Fathom’ CD is a masterpiece)

Mortification – ‘Scrolls of the Megilloth’ is a death metal masterpiece; ‘Post Momentary Affliction’ is a personal favourite

Paramaecium – doom metal (the ‘Exhumed of the Earth’ CD is a life of Christ with operatic vocals on the first track)

Red Sea – another must-have if you’re a serious fan of Deep Purple (Robyn Kyle Basauri formerly of Die Happy is an awesome vocalist)

Resurrection Band (also known as Rez or Rez Band) – the pioneers of Christian heavy rock

- anything by them (standout releases IMHO are ‘Between Heaven ‘N’ Hell’, ‘Silence Screams’, ‘Innocent Blood’ & ‘Lament’)

(Randy) Rose – formerly of MATW (recommended if you like Danzig)

- check out ‘Sacrificium’, ‘Healing’ & ‘Into the Unknown’ CD’s

Sacred Warrior – great power metal & brilliant operatic-style vocals of Rey Parra (recommended if you’re into Queensryche)

Sometime Sunday – similar to Henry Rollins (Band) with a righteous angry in-your-face no-nonsense attitude

Stryper: ‘To Hell With The Devil’ CD (a classic)

Tourniquet – the greatest technical metal band that I know of (Ted Kirkpatrick is an awesome drummer)

Undercover – ‘Balance of Power’ is a great CD

Vengeance (Rising) – the first Christian grindcore band (check out ‘Human Sacrifice’ & ‘Once Dead’)

Whitecross –

X-Sinner – ‘Get It’ CD (recommended if you like the Brian Johnson era of AC/DC)

Inspirational/Reflective

Various: ‘Heaven & Earth’ CD (Sparrow) (a great collaboration between Michelle Tumes, Rebecca St. James, Michelle Nordeman, Margaret Becker & Jennifer Knapp)

Various: ‘Streams’ CD (Word) (beautiful music and songs to meditate to/with)

Instrumental

Lanny Cordola: ‘Electric Warrior/Acoustic Saint’ & ‘Of Riffs & Symphonies’ CD’s (brilliant guitarist on a par with Jo Satriani and Steve Vai)

Phil Keaggy – guitar virtuoso

Kerry Livgren: ‘One Of Several Possible Musiks’ CD

Jeff Scheetz – another great guitarist

Rosemary Sutton – ‘It’s Not Mozart ...’ (quality piano instrumentals with a hint of Enya)

Modern Worship

Delirious

MercyMe: ‘Almost There’ (great combination of worship songs in a well-produced pop/rock style)

Jami Smith (great combination of worship song performed in a rock style, with a voice reminiscent of Suzi DeMarchi [former lead singer of the Baby Animals])

Progressive Rock/Metal & Goth

Balance Of Power – on a par with Dream Theater

Saviour Machine

Virgin Black – esp. their ‘Trance’ EP (how they can better this masterpiece is beyond me!)

Rock

According To John – their debut ‘A2J’ CD (showcases good lyrics and rock sensibilities)

Allies – esp. the ‘Long Way From Paradise’ & ‘The River’ CDs

Audio Adrenaline – esp. the ‘Bloom’ CD (great modern rock)

Curious Fools – esp. the ‘Read’ CD (i’ve only recently rediscovered how awesome Curious Fools was.

If you like U2, you’ll appreciate the vocal similarities/passion of lead singer Stephen Murray.)

Rick Elias (& The Confessions) – midwest rock in the same league as John ‘Cougar’ Mellencamp

Keith Green – one of the founding fathers of Jesus music (great piano player/vocalist/lyricist who is second only to Don Francisco when it comes to putting Jesus’ parables/stories to music)

- ‘His Incredible Youth’ CD (a fascinating look at Keith’s music when he was only 18 years of age – before he became a Christian)

Idle Cure – their first album is a rock classic

Phil Keaggy – guitar virtuoso & vocalist whose love for Paul McCartney’s music comes through at times

- esp. the ‘Find Me In These Fields’ & ‘Crimson And Blue’ CD’s

Legend – esp. the self-titled CD (arena rock at its best!)

David Meece: ‘7’ CD (of all his material, this rocks the most)

Larry Norman – the ‘So Long Ago The Garden’, ‘Only Visiting This Planet’ & ‘In Another Land’ CD’s or almost anything else from him (the father of ‘Jesus Rock’)

Petra – esp. the ‘Never Say Die’, ‘More Power To Ya’, ‘Beat The System’, ‘This Means War’ & ‘On Fire’ CD’s

Purpose – the John Lennon influence in their music is unmistakable

Rachel Rachel

The 77’s – anything by them (one of the greatest Christian rock bands, period!)

Tonio K.: ‘Notes From The Lost Civilization’ CD

Veil of Ashes: ‘Pain’ The ‘Pain’ album (highly underrated possibly because it doesn’t pull punches lyrically-speaking. Produced by the late Gene Eugene. Every track is strong musically and lyrically with Sean Doty’s unique vocals.)

Greg X. Volz: ‘River Is Rising’ CD (Petra’s former lead singer really rocks with this one)

White Heart: ‘Nothing But The Best - Rock Classics’ CD (esp. check out the rock anthem ‘Powerhouse’)

Worship

Sons Of Korah – excellent musical settings of the psalms (they bring the psalms to life)