Go beyond academics
Try Lobster

Crawf, a compilation of tracks by 15 Boston area bands on Throbbing Lobster Records.

Throbbing Lobster Records began at MIT's radio station, WMBR-FM, where local rock and new wave fill the airwaves on weekday mornings. Last year, WMBR disk jockey Chuck Warner decided to start a record company and put out his favorite selections from the tapes Boston bands sent to the station. The result was Nobody Got on the Guest List! the definitive record of the summer's success turned into a tradition with a second compilation (Let's Blood, released last November), and now Crawf has arrived to solid your ears.

Side one of Crawf is great for creating the illusion that it's 8:30 am on Monday and you're blasting WMBR while brushing your teeth. It will also please those who consider 1966 the ultimate year. All eight bands on side one have mastered the 1960s garage-rock style, complete with droning guitars, tremolo harmonies, wailing organs, and thumping rhythms. Despite the historical influence (Capture The Flag's "Looking Through at You" seems to have borrowed a melody from the Monkees), all the songs sound fresh, and you can jump up and down to them.

Also, the cots don't match the previous standard of Lobster quality. Not much stands out on a first listen, and the songwriting is often ragged. The contributions of the Prime Movers and the Turbojive, two of Boston's finest groups, suffer from undermixed, rushed vocals, and pale text to what they had on Nobody.

There is little to say about side two. It contains another 1960s-style pop song—"Yellow Brick Road" by New Pants from Old—but also some attempts at novelty songs that don't hit my funnybone. The rest is disappointing, particularly the song by the Underachievers, who sounded like Y's bright young undergraduates on Nobody.

WMBR listeners will enjoy Crawf!, but it will never be number one on my party list. I'm keeping my ears open for the next Lobster platter.

Katie Schwartz

Talking Heads go better than Coke

Little Creatures, Talking Heads on Sire Records.

This record is everything that we were promised New Coke would be. "Something sweeter, yet more refreshing," it is less bizarre than previous works, but still just as much fun.

The nine new songs sound most like those from Talking Heads' previous album, More Songs about Buildings & Food. The rhythm sections, conceptual unity of albums, and Brian Eno tape-loop treatments have been traded back for the sentimentality of guitar-and-vocal sound. But in many ways, the Heads' sound has matured in the past eight years. Vocals are often harmonized. Psychotic, coffee-house quirks have been replaced by a relaxed, smooth attitude. David Byrne often sings in a low register. The stripped quotations of various musical styles (for example, the steel drums on "Lo, a Great Love Comes to Town") have been expanded and elaborated without being vulgar or parodic. The Heads have molded some tready pop licks (passing guitars, ominous church bells, and synthesizer oozes, for example) into their own distinctive personal style. "Stop Making Sense" seemed to want to make an album of American songs.

In fact, one of the best songs on the album is a country and western tune, "Creatures of Love:"

Well, I've seen sex, and I think it's alright.

It makes little creatures come to life.

Well, I'm tough, or I can turn away.

I've seen sex, and I think it's okay.

We are creatures, creatures of love...

What makes this song so exciting is not only how well it works as a C&W tune, but also how well it works as a Talking Heads tune. It has their trademarks: an unorthodox outlook on life, minimalist lyrics, and strong social commentary.

Lyrics in other songs talk about such diverse topics as sexuality, the genius of love, the ontology of difference and life after death.

Doctor, doctor, what do I am

Are we strange human beings?

Well, I guess you can learn to think.

So maybe find out what I mean, and I can find out what you mean.

As in the classical novelty song along the lines of Shel Silverstein's "Old Age"

"Road to Nowhere" has been getting a lot of airplay recently, and for good reason. Byrne is not kidding in the title, and contrasts his feelings with those of the protagonist.

This lyrical masterpiece is a little awkward as recorded, since he sings both parts, but is very clear on the lyric sheet.

Little Creatures is a strong album for the Heads, especially after Stop Making Sense, which broke no new grounds, and was much too commercial for my tastes (the original versions of almost all the songs were much better). It may not be their best album ever, but it is better than New Coke.

Bill Coderre

Classical chamber music summary

MIT Chamber Music Society, June 20, in Kresge Auditorium.

Clapping the strings of Kresge a few nights ago, I heard someone exclaim behind me: "Gee, this is just like an LSC movie." Well ... not quite. The LSC string was replaced that night by members of the MIT Chamber Music Society, and instead of a soundtrack we heard music—a lot of it.

The program began with Mozart's famous Magic Flute trio in E-flat major, K. 448. From beginning to end the performance was beautiful, Mozart, in the hands of his orchestra, was summery, full of sparkling harmonies, and a lot of it.

From Mozart we passed to Dvorak's String Quartet No. 14 in F major, K. 719. The playing this time was not quite as good as in the beginning. Despite Sandria Ayres, who controlled her own part quite well, the Allegro and the Adagio remained a little slow and uninspired. Things changed by the third part, however. The finale was a veritable Allegro non troppo, in tempo as well as in spirit. Simpleton sounds were surrounds us and made us smile at violins, cellos, clarinets and pianos. And indeed there were smiles in the audience when a miscellaneous group of two sopranos, one alto, two tenor and one bassoonist—stared the first part of Bach's second Brandenburg concerto.

We all know that Bach is both old enough to cultivate tradition, and also widely composed in the most fantastic instruments. There it was—before our ears, chocked in brass, it had nothing but admiration for the ingenuity of the arrangement, before Bach, the group had played Adagio from De-

By Richard Shore

Encore

Baritone Kevin Bras and pianist Barbara Plowes performed four of his songs: Songs of Sorrow, Philhyle, The Order of Rosalind and Invitation to a Voyage. It is difficult to characterize these songs. They are sentimental, lyrical, and reminiscent of French chansonettes, romanticism and impressionism. Brass sang simply, missing lit- tle in the passion of both the words and the music. Never was his singing overdressed or in bad taste, and never did brass put itself in front of the music. Too simple gave an equally good accompaniment.

Concluding the first half was a simple quintet by Johann Andreas Anon, op. 19, no. 2. After the subtle emotions of De-
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In the music, one could easily have judged the music and harmonies to be more harmonious than previous works, but still just as much fun.

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