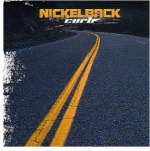


Nickelback – Curb (1996)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Little Friend* 3:49 2 *Pusher* 4:01 3 *Detangler* 3:41 4 *Curb* 4:52 5 *Where?* 4:27 6 *Falls Back On* 2:58 7 *Sea Groove* 3:58 8 *Fly* 2:53 9 *Just Four* 3:54 10 *Left* 4:03 11 *Window Shopper* 3:43 12 *I Don't Have* 4:06 Bass – Mike Kroeger Drums – Brandon Kroeger Rhythm Guitar, Backing Vocals – Ryan Peake Vocals, Lead Guitar – Chad Kroeger + Cello – Ariel Watson Drums – Boyd Grealy

"Curb" is the Canadian rock band's debut LP, and it's a pretty solid first effort. That doesn't mean the album is perfect, though.

One of the positive things about this album is that Nickelback have a very grunge-inspired sound, which may please fans of the genre. Another positive is the lyrical content, especially on songs such as "Where"" "Fly" "Left" and the title track. Mr. Kroeger seemed a lot more focused and sincere with his lyrics on the bands earlier albums, unlike their newer works with songs such as "Something In Your Mouth" (shudders). The next pro with the album is instrumentation. It may come off as choppy to some, but on tracks like "Falls Back On" and "Detangler" it really stands out. Speaking of instrumentation, the bands drummer at the time, Brandon Kroeger, was very energetic, much like the bands current drummer Daniel Adair, who is also an excellent drummer. The albums highlight songs include "Where"" A fast, raw tune about love and trust, "Falls Back On" a catchy, grungey, more energetic track, "Fly" a nice song about Kroeger as a child wanting to know where bad men go when the die, and "Left" about a man who drowns, his final words being "I'm the only one left" hence the title.

Now onto the negatives. One of them is the vocal work. Chad Kroeger's growling vocals may come off as decent to some, but those unfamiliar will just find them unpleasant, especially on tracks like "Just Four" where Kroeger sounds as if he is singing through his teeth. So glad that song was rerecorded. Another is the way some songs are recorded. "Window Shopper" has

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decent instrumentals but the vocals on it are difficult to understand due to the microphone fuzzing out Kroeger's voice. Although, that could be a good thing because it makes it sound a lot more underground. The third con is lack of variety. Much like the 1999 follow up "The State", the album suffers from too many similar sounding moments, such as "Detangler" and "Fly" and "Left" and "I Don't Have". Some of the album's weaker songs include "Sea Groove" and "Pusher".

The album as a whole has a very underground/indie production style to it, incorporating elements of Grunge, Post-grunge, and Alt-metal. The band had also yet to be signed at the time the album was released. Also, when originally released, the album cover was different than the one that is shown above, which really makes no sense. Think about it. The album is called Curb. "Curb" means the side of a road, and the new cover shows the middle of a road. I know it's not a big deal, but Roadrunner Records really should've done their research.

So, in the end, "Curb" is a strong debut album which, despite a few faults that I described above, can be a very entertaining spin for those who are fans of the grunge genre, or indie music. It has ups and downs, the ups of which are definitely worth a listen. If you're wanting to find something good about Nickelback, listen to this album. But keep in mind that they can't please everyone. ---WesleyJones, sputnikmusic.com

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