



THE MARTLET

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The Martlet's guide to music reviews

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General principles:

- When it comes to writing a review, your opinion is the value you are offering.
 - What do you have to offer that nobody else has?
 - What stands out to you?
- Avoid being too wordy/flowery.
 - Easy to become too descriptive, but also easy to write something boring that doesn't capture the music. Walk the line between descriptive and succinct.
 - Metaphors and similes can add imagery to a piece, but make sure it's not too convoluted.
- Writing a review is like writing an essay: you need an argument. Did you like the work? Why or why not? Prove it.
- If you were reading the review, what would you want to learn about? Focus on that
- Know your audience. Write in a way that will appeal to them. Don't over simplify if you know your audience is knowledgeable.
 - Ex. If you're reviewing classical music be technical, not as important if you're reviewing pop.

Album:

- Listen in order the first time. Helps you form an opinion on overall vibe and cohesion.
- Look for overarching themes.
- Contextualize the album by talking about the artist, past musical endeavors, etc.
- Why is the album important now?

Song:

- Individually less common, but singling out certain songs in an album is cool. If you're just reviewing one song you need to dig and analyze heavily.
- What stands out?
- Look at things like verse, bridge, chorus, hook, lyrics.

Artist:

- Should be an interview, as this is something you can offer to the publication.
- Talk about: back story, previous releases, what led them to this moment.
- If there's no interview, it's unlikely this will be an interesting piece for a publication, unless the artist's profile is part of an album review.
- Doing an artist interview means you can often snag free tickets to their show!

Show:

- Give people a window into the day/night.
- What do you have to offer that nobody else has to offer? Being at the show.
- What was the mood? Bring the reader into the show through description.
- Quality: good or bad? Did you enjoy yourself? Were others enjoying themselves? (You'll sometimes end up at shows that aren't for you, but that doesn't mean that those around you aren't having a great time.)