

MUSIC BRIEFS

House of Love

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Fontana

● 1/2 7880

Some bands are very good at exploring darker, Gothic sounds which use mood and emotion as their key musical tools — Joy Division took dark rock to excruciating extremes, while the Church has been successful at integrating it with pop. The House of Love fails miserably in their debut attempt to try to create a hauntingly brooding, melodic sound. This record yawns, lags, and bores. Sometimes the band presents a potentially catchy melody only to let it sit idly and drill into the listener's ear until it becomes monotonous. Even on the album's brightest spot, "Shine On" a more dynamic track that brings back memories of Cactus World News, the song finally slips into anonymity when the band drags all the air out of the chorus, "she she she Shine On," in a chant-like sequence. Despite recent collegiate acclaim, the *House of Love* is musically empty and lyrically impotent.

— Charles Marshall