



Records

Psychedelic Furs Mirror Moves CBS

The Psychedelic Furs eponymous debut album was a dense forest of ideas, many imperfectly realised. By steps the music and lyrics have become more focused, simple and direct. With *Forever Now* and the barnstorming 'Love My Way' the Furs proved they could carry their tender emotions to the commercial market. *Mirror Moves* is another step down that same road.

Keith Forsey, the producer of 'Flashdance', has been enlisted to give the Furs their cleanest, most commercial sound yet. The songs too are less demanding but still distinctive. Highlights are 'The Ghost In You' and 'Heaven'. Richard Butler's hoarse vocals and the chiming score strike the right balance of emotion and posture.

Elsewhere things aren't quite as successful. For the most part the other songs lack the strength and resilience of the band's better material. In everyday terms that's still at least as good as most of the competition.

The Furs' next move will be the one to watch. *Mirror Moves* is — or should be — the end of this stage of the band's career. It fairly captures the essence of their sound but marks no step forward. Reflection required.

David Taylor

The Human League Hysteria Virgin

"In terms of world success the Beatles are on top and nobody will ever beat them but there's always a change of being second and if we can carry on for a few more years with albums like *Dare*, then we might manage second." (Adrian Wright, *RIU*, June 1982)

OK, so it's not nice to throw quotations in peoples' faces, but be honest, the Human League have asked for it. Since the surprise success of *Dare* their conceit has fed only breadcrumbs to their fans in the form of a dub album, *Love and Dancing*, and a couple of paltry singles in 'Fascination' and 'Mirror Man'. Poor harvest from a band that helped establish the synthesiser as an alternative pop music.

It's been two-and-a-half years since *Dare* and in the interim there's been a host of spineless electronic overnights who've done little but cause a reaction against this synthetic pop. Ironically, it's in this feeling of backlash that *Hysteria* has to make its mark.

This is a big enough handicap but the album has bigger problems: Oakey's vocals, once acceptable as a novel part of a new synthesiser band striving for expression but never reaching perfection, are now embarrassingly limited.

Singing aside, an album stands or falls on its song content and that's the chief reason why *Hysteria* is horizontal. There's no real emotional commitment in the tired old pop structures of 'I'm Coming Back', 'Louise' or 'Betrayed'. Joanne and Susanne sigh and doo-wop sweetly but they can't save a repertoire that

doesn't have that crucial spark.

The only glimpses of energy and class are 'Life On Your Own', a plaintive appeal with the best tune on the album, and the single 'The Lebanon', a serious political gesture musically derivative with a Joy Division bass line and an Edge guitar figure. Small change.

Strategically the League have made a grave mistake in taking so long to follow up *Dare*. Time has made their style of music sound stale and resigned, as a title, *Hysteria* couldn't be further from the truth.

George Kay

Prince Charles and the City Beat Band Combat Zone Virgin

As the record cover tells us, Prince Charles is the "baddest motherfunker in the world" — this man is righteous, a true defender of the funk faith. On this, his third album, he opens up his vision/ version of the street beat — the *Gang War* has become an open war, the city is a real *Combat Zone* full of hip hop warriors demanding 'More Money' and dancing in the streets to electro versions of 'Jailhouse Rock'.

This is the real post-punk apocalypse down Rick James style; it's the album that *Cold Blooded* tried to be. Hard urban rockers and cool ballads. Great stuff! I'm beginning to believe in Prince Charles' PR. He sure is a tough motherfunker.

Kerry Buchanan

Violent Femmes Hallowed Ground Slash

What's the intro?
Ah ... when the Violent

Femmes were in the country this year they displayed, both on and off stage, an enthusiasm for many different kinds of music. That enthusiasm comes through on *Hallowed Ground*. The first album's kind of rock 'n' roll is still here but it's stirred in with country, blues, gospel, jazz — but they're not just dabblers — the hallowed ground of the title might just as easily refer to the musical heritage they draw on.

And the conclusion?

Now? Already? Okay. The Femmes' first album was a neat (and narrow) burst from Gordon Gano's soul. But groups have made albums of that nature and never made a really good record again. *Hallowed Ground* indicates that the Violent Femmes have it in them to make good records for a very long time.

About this Gano ...

He's strange. There's a real tension between his sincere Christian beliefs and the near-psychotic edge of some of his words. 'Country Death Song', for instance, is the first-person tale of a farmer who loses his mind, takes his little daughter out into the night and pushes her down a well ("I pushed with all my might, I pushed with all my love.") and hangs himself in shame. Sometimes it's a little disturbing. But then again, it's probably this tension, along with that between the album's loud and soft moments, that makes the music interesting.

This religion ...

It pervades the album. But Gano's no preacher. Christianity's a part of his life and he gotta sing about it. I don't find it at all intrusive.

What about the other guys?

Brian Ritchie (bass) and Victor De Lorenzo (percussion) seem to

have had much more of an influence on this album's sound than on the first. They're both great, explorative players and they do more than just play the songs. Fun, too.

Which songs do you like?

'Country Death Song' — it captures the weird element present in some of the best country music (just listen to Jerry Reed even talk). And, in particular, 'Never Tell', a dangerous piece of whisper/scream. Ritchie's psychedelic bass in the scream parts is great.

Any you don't like?

Well ... the second side definitely seems to lose its way a bit, especially in parts of the jazz romp 'Black Girls'. While there probably aren't enough really great songs to make it a brilliant album there's nothing dreary enough to make it a mediocre album. I don't have to lift the needle for anything.

This review is a bit long.

I know

Russell Brown

Nik Kershaw Human Racing MCA

Enter the latest in English chart-toppers. But this one's set to last a little longer. Kershaw is a multi-instrumentalist of considerable talent and taste, writing in a Spandau-Duran vein, but with only a modest hint of pomp. *Human Racing* is pretty good — from the sharp brass (real), and chunky synth to Charlie Morgan's flexible drumming it breathes competence. Kershaw himself manages some nifty vocal percussion, and credible Stevie Wonder impersonation on the title track. The tunes ain't bad either.

There's 4 or 5 potential singles of which 'Wouldn't It Be Good' is

the most obvious, and 'Drum Talk' and 'Shame on You' the most durable. The rest walks a thin line between engaging nice-guy-pop and tomorrow's Foodtown music.

An impressive if slightly bland debut, but a sense of humour could make his next album quite a treat. Watch this man.

Andrew Rockell

Rank and File Sundown Slash

Sundown is the debut album by Texans Rank and File and it renews contact with traditional American country 'n' blues. The Kinman brothers, Tony and Chip, form the nucleus of the band, re-interpreting influences as diverse as Roy Orbison and Buddy Holly into a punky hoe-down sensibility uniquely its own. These guys hold a certain conception of contemporary country, blending rural innocence with urban aspiration; their particular sound is treated as if it were a vessel that anyone who had the gumption to call himself a musician is qualified to fill.

It's all pretty much straightforward country, with songs about the doggoned doldrums ('Lucky Day', 'I Don't Go Out Much Anymore'), songs eloquent and gentle in strength ('Sundown'), songs of mourning melancholia ('Coyote') and yes, included also is the pallid cash-in of 'The Conductor Wore Black'. Imagine the bastard offspring of Merle Haggard and X and you're nearly there. Country or rock? Chip Kinman puts it this way: "They may have different beats and people may dance to them differently but it's really the same emotion."

Offers from the sequined jacket brigade of *That's Country* are now pending ...

S.J. Townshend

RECORD & CASSETTE SELLOUT!

Retailer closing down — entire stock must go at rock-bottom prices.

New LPs from \$1.99
Cassettes from \$4.95

No single LP or Tape over \$8.99

Be quick — or miss out!

127 ONEHUNGA MALL
(lower end — opp. Police Station) Phone 665-823

Enquiries invited from Retailers for Record Bins, Cassette Racks etc

THE 11 PIECE SOUL SENSATION.

RICK BRYANT & THE

JIVE BOMBERS

JUNE.

13, D.B. Mt. Maunganui.
14, Framptons, Hamilton.
15,16, Bell Block, New Plymouth.
17, Eltham.
23,24, Ascot Theatre, Wellington.
26, Fosters, Wanganui.

27, Awapuni, Palmerston North.
28, River Bar, Gisborne.
29, D.B. Mt. Maunganui.
30, Campus Radio Concert, Auckland University Cafe.

JULY.

12,13,14, Gluepot.

NATIONAL CAMPUS & S.I. TOUR, JULY - AUGUST.

RADIO ACTIVE



DEBUT SINGLE

OUT NOW
Angela
&
Money Man

SINGLE AVAILABLE AT RECORD WAREHOUSE
EP OUT SOON ON ODE RECORDS

LOOK...

a sample of our discounted albums:

TALKING HEADS, Speaking in Tongues	\$12.99	\$10.50
GENESIS, Genesis	\$12.99	\$9.99
THE CURE, The Top	\$12.99	\$9.99
ROCKWELL, Somebody's Watching Me	\$12.99	\$8.99
BERLIN, Pleasure Victim	\$12.99	\$10.99
THE SMITHS, The Smiths	\$12.99	\$9.99
THE MOCKERS, Swear It's True	\$12.99	\$10.99
QUEEN, The Works	\$12.99	\$10.99
THOMPSON TWINS, Into the Gap	\$12.99	\$10.50
STYLE COUNCIL, Cafe Bleu	\$12.99	\$10.99
UB40, Labour of Love	\$12.99	\$10.99
DIRE STRAITS, Alchemy	\$17.99	\$15.99
SIMPLE MINDS, Sparkle in the Rain	\$12.99	\$10.99
DANCE EXPONENTS, Prayers Be Answered	\$12.99	\$10.99
SHANNON, Let the Music Play	\$12.99	\$10.99
CHINA CRISIS, Fire and Steel	\$12.99	\$10.99
HUMAN LEAGUE, Hysteria	\$12.99	\$10.99
FOOTLOOSE SOUNDTRACK, Various	\$12.99	\$10.50
BILLY IDOL, Rebel Yell	\$12.99	\$10.99
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, Born in the USA	\$12.99	\$10.99
HOLIDAY GOLD, Various	\$12.99	\$8.99

Warning: Compare our individually priced albums before you buy! We stock NZ's largest catalogue of LPs, tapes and singles!!

IMPORTS: DJs' and collectors' delight!! Assorted 12" imports just arrived. Be quick!

PLUS LPs — Au Pairs, Crass, Oi, Cramps, Wire, etc, etc.

2 FIFTY SIX
records & tapes

256 Queen St.
Auckland.
Ph 732-828

All over the world...

We've played guitar with the best. Sit in with us at your next session. Bronze, Wound, or Phosphor Bronze — Ask for us at your favorite music store. We're available in a gauge to meet your special needs.

THE MARTIN GUITAR COMPANY NAZARETH, PA 18064 U.S.A.



Sole NZ Distributor: Lyn McAllister Music Ltd
PO Box 39-143, Auckland West.
Phone (09) 34-936