

Shake Summation

The Verlaines 10 O'Clock in the Afternoon (Flying Nun)

When they finally sorted out lineup problems and got playing again this year, I suspect the Verlaines found themselves with a more receptive public than they expected. During their absence 'Death and the Maiden' had become something of a crossover hit; it was even endorsed by Karyn Hay. It will be interesting to see how this EP fares — the quality's as good as ever but there's none of that easy user-friendly swirl about these songs. It's a spartan-sounding record — the songs are cast in quite harsh relief. The songs. The loping 'Joed Out' is the best, although the last line of 'You Say You' provides the record's most penetrating moment. Graeme Downes comes across here as an incorrigible romantic

("Your eyes are as black as the black notes / Songs that I wish I had wrote") and to me he's still probably the best lyricist in contemporary NZ music. Four of the songs were written in 1982 and seemed to be fueled by a love affair back then. I wonder what he writes about now? The increased introduction of Jane Dodd's airy voice is very welcome — it's an ideal foil to Downes' melodic shout. Shit, there's too much to say here — just buy the record and listen to it more than twice.

The Idles No No No (Jayrem)

A rill ragey little toon with a helluva hook that harkens back to the good ol' days of the Knobz and the Spaces, only with balls — like guitar, y'know? Christ ... these guys are big? Footnote: The flip, 'Xmas Day' was the one I liked off *Agroculture* and, treated with more subtlety and imagination, could probably be a pretty good song.

Sons in Jeopardy Sign Of Life (Hit Singles)

Considerably more lively than the boys' debut (maybe the title's prophetic) but it's still hard to know what they're actually on about. 'Wax', on the flip, is a cliché from beginning to end. Too much mystery and not enough imagin-

Flak/Eight Living Legs Emigration (Flying Nun)

The record's title is presumably a reference to the fact that all of Eight Living Legs and two out of three Flaks have departed the country. By the time they split Flak had developed into a highly idiosyncratic, sometimes exciting band. Their two tracks here are reasonable but not exceptional recordings. Their *Monitor* cassette, on Industrial Tapes is a much better representation. Eight Living Legs have perhaps more obvious influences but they succeed better here, especially with the marvelous 'Five Yards Ahead' (always wondered what the words were ...)

Say Yes to Apes Knife EP (TV Eye)

Apes go wild in country, hah? 'This is Your Lucky Night' is a C&W lope with a more specific lyric than Smith usually permits himself. It'll piss off a lot of people (including, I expect, my flatmates) but I love it absolutely to bits (yeah, surprise, surprise ...) It gotta singalong chorus an' everything. 'Deniz Tek', dedicated to the guitar demigod of the same name is fun but doesn't scale the heights of Birdmanesque fury, if that's what it's meant to do. 'The

Great Western' is one o' those Teev instrumentals where only those involved really understand what's going on.

Martial Law Positive (Hit Singles)

The title track is a pleasant smooth little song that I wouldn't object to hearing on the radio but I don't know if I'd wrench myself out of my seat to put it on the turntable very often. The two songs on the flip are similar but 'Strange Legend' is rather more interesting.

Ja Ja Jackal Fun Supreme (Ode)

A earnest attempt at smooth jazz-funk that has its moments instrumentally but never really lights up. 'Back And Beyond' is a livelier but, like 'Fun Supreme' is a not-so-hot song crammed full of chops of varying quality. A shame, because there really are some very good ideas tucked away here.

Radio Active, Radio (Ode)

The title track sounds like the execrable Flock of Seagulls and that about sets the tone for the whole record. I think if these guys stumbled across an original idea they'd be scared to hell.

Raw Deal Junk Mail (Circular)

A "light-hearted" little song

about guess what. It sounds like it was the keyboard player's idea because his bit is louder than all the others'. Highly competent and utterly inconsequential.

Russell Brown

On Tape

Bill Direen Live At the Gladstone

(\$6, PO Box 2190, Christchurch) A pretty rough recording of Direen and guitar, solo at Christchurch's perennial music venue. Very interesting in terms of the selection of covers, alternative versions and previews of Direen's forthcoming album. But the sound probably means it's more for Direen completists than someone looking for an introduction to the man. RB

Luke Hurley

At one time you couldn't move for singer/songwriters — everybody wanted to be Neil Young's first cousin. Now, they're a rare breed, and this is where Dunedin's Luke Hurley comes in, a singer/guitarist/protest song-

writer who's making a few fans in Dunedin. This tape, although it's great four track quality, doesn't capture the craziness or humour of his live performance, but songs like 'Disco', 'Nobody Knows' and 'Japanese OD' have the required message and hooks to make the grade.

To buy the tape please send \$10 (includes postage) to 2 Marlow St, St Kilda, Dunedin. GK **Political Asylum**

Fresh Hate

(Rites, Box 25-004, Auckland) "You can write 'Punks not dead' on your back, it's only intelligence that you lack." Straight to the point, these guys mean business — anti-violence, anti-war, anti-rip-off ... anti-everything? Nihilistic noise? No, this Scottish combo are definitely pro intelligence and their insightful lyrics are set to such inspiring music — no amateur thrasharama, superb guitar work which leaves no questions as to why people overseas are making positive noises about this band. 'Winter' is the standout track, a slow, floating tune, wonderfully atmospheric, a gem. This is Rites' hottest release and should put them up there with "Corporates" like Industrial and Fallsafe. Don't let it pass you by. **Neil Cartwright**

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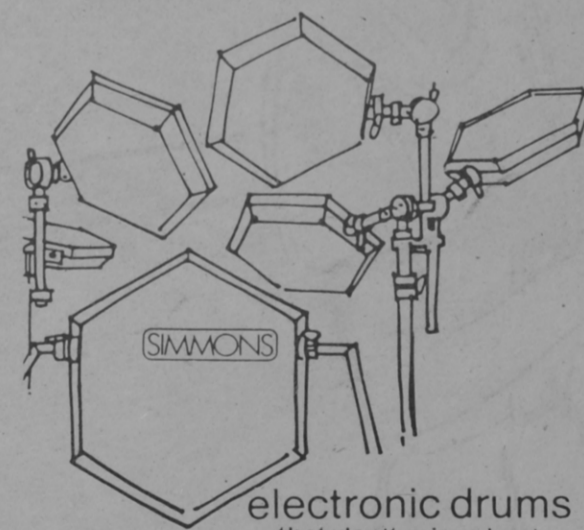
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