

**Various Artists
20 Reggae Classics
(Music World)**
Music World have a most intriguing back catalogue of 60s reggae. Having reissued two great Maytals albums and some of the best Trojan collections, they now assemble the original versions of a host of popular remakes. Just about every track will be familiar, but how nice to hear the way they started out. Go for authenticity every time. DC

**Eurythmics
In The Garden (RCA)**
An almost inevitable reissue, I suppose. The first LP Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart made after the split of the Tourists. They surprised everyone, first by opting to record in Conny Plank's Cologne Studio, then by producing what was to become a platinum sound. Name checks here include Robert Gori and Holger Czukay. The sound is eerie, vaguely psychedelic, but the direction is clear with hindsight. More than just a curiosity. DC

**Michael Schenker Group
Rock Will Never Die (Chrysalis)**
Ol' Sour-kraut's done well to keep himself active during a four year solo career in which his band (a continually changing lineup of heavy rock mercenaries) has churned out four increasingly unremarkable studio albums. The

highpoints have obviously been the live performances and following the excellent *One Night At Budokan* comes this second live album, recorded in London. Thought the "songs" are still pretty dull (intros and outros for guitar solos) they're considerably peppier than the studio versions and Schenker's guitar playing is as hot as ever. For an altogether headier mixture, however, I'd recommend holding out for Gal Moore's live album, due soon. CC

**Mitch Ryder and the Detroit
Wheels Greatest Hits (RCA)**
A good compilation of Mitch Ryder's 60s hits, with no serious omissions. Ryder's rasping vocals backed by the power of the Wheels make this some of the most satisfying white R&B of the period and even if the recording sounds dated the excitement is here. Far superior to his limp comeback albums. One irritating aspect is the failure to include a track listing on the cover. Nevertheless, a must for 60s buffs. DP

**Jefferson Starship
Nuclear Furniture (RCA)**
In which former radicals turned AOR stars go through slump, reassess position in rock's superstructure and emerge successful once again. Nowadays, of course, they're about as revolutionary and menacing as a sponge pudding, but show here they still have an ear for a commercial pop song. A very consistent album, light and

breezy, with Grace Slick still able to send a shiver down your spine with her superb vocals. Old hippies don't die, they just mutate. CC
The Idles, Tuesday (Jayrem)
If the Idles aim to be New Zealand's answer to Duran Duran they're a country mile short. Their songs have a mid-seventies rambling feel; the rhythms plod predictably, the vocal delivery owes more than a little to Graham Parker's sneer and the guitar lines lack flash. Live the material is more effective than their EP was but the stage patter is awkward and embarrassing. C'mon Idles, be brave and experiment. Rock'n'roll means more than packing 'em in on a one-night stand. DT

**Alexis Korner
Juvenile Delinquent (Charisma)**
This collection of final recordings by Alexis Korner, the "daddy" of British R&B includes one of Pete Frame's exhaustive rock family trees. It shows clearly what a pivotal figure Korner was and his recent death closes a chapter. Alexis Korner's crusade for the blues in Britain changed music. His importance to the emerging Rolling Stones and an absurdly long list of others has been documented. That said, it would be nicer to remember Korner for more than this not entirely unpleasant collection of quasi-funk, Ralph Steadman's cover cartoon and the affectionate

tribute of the liner notes notwithstanding, there isn't enough. KW
Clannad, Legend (RCA)
Clannad are not your bona fide traditional Celtic folk minstrels (they've too much contemporary lushness and multi-tracking for that) but anyone who heard their heart-wrenching title song to British TV's *Harry's Game* last year will know that they've got soul. *Legend* is another soundtrack, this time to a film on 'Robin of Sherwood', and although that sounds like mediaeval pap the music has some delightful moments, namely lush tearful ballads like 'Now Is Here' and 'Strange Land' and strong instrumentals such as 'Together We' and 'Lady Marian'. Leader Paul Brennan tries to claim authorship of these ditties but there isn't a note here that hasn't started life in Carolan's back catalogue. A minor quibble, this is a nice album. GK

**One The Juggler
Nearly A Sin (RCA)**
A band of three to four gypsies tripping through Bowie vocal mannerisms and half-arsed Stones' riffs. Vocalist Rokko sounds like he's just discovered Ziggy Stardust, which is not a bad thing, but what is worrying is that the whole album has a smug, obsolete yet semi-hip '70' texture. They're not smart enough to be Duran Duran so the next best thing is ripping off somebody else's decade. I'm worried. GK

Funky
**Herbie Hancock
Sound System (CBS)**
After making a monster sound like 'Rockit', what do you do for the follow-up? Well, what Herbie has done is to make 'Rockit' again. Can you stand it?
The lead track 'Hardrock' repeats a lot of what made 'Rockit' so fresh and exciting but this time with a guitar break (he must have been listening to 'Run DMC') and less turntable work from Grandmaster DST. There is just something missing and I think it's that sense of fun and of experimenting with something new that the earlier album had. The best aspect of 'Sound System', apart from the great cover, is the use of talking drums and *shekere*; an attempt perhaps to merge the modern culture of Fairlight programming and computer graphics with traditional African music. It almost works on 'Junku' but gets a little lost on the title track.
A bit of a disappointment but maybe Herbie will surprise us with something fresh next time. KB

**Kenny G
G-Force (Arista)**
The sub-genre of jazz-funk does not hold any appeal for me, it tends to lack the hard edge and soul that black music should have.
**Smokey Robinson
Essar (Motown)**
One of the most frequently played records in my collection is *Smokey Robinson and the Miracles' Greatest Hits*, a vital selection of super-fine black pop music. What makes it so good is the pure and cool vocal style of Smokey Robinson and, thankfully, on *Essar* the voice remains just as emotive and thrilling as it ever was. The whole first side is simply perfect, from the mid-tempo 'And I Don't Love You' and 'Train Of Thought' to the classic ballad form of 'I Can't Find'. Side two is plagued by weak material like the West Coast-sounding 'Driving Through Life In The Fast Lane' but still has its sweet moments on a couple of great, slinky ballads.
This is Smokey's best work since the sublime 'Cruising' and at times on 'And I Don't Love You' it comes close to catching the magic of his early work. Kerry Buchanan

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