

Records

Patti Labelle Winner in You WEA

According to *Spin* magazine Patti Labelle is a great gambler, losing \$10,000 on one game of blackjack. With *Winner in You* she's taking no chances, with the accent on winner she's stacked the deck with a collection of songs written and produced by a multitude of talents. The overall effect is one of maturity and strength that suits this powerful diva.

In her youth she fronted the Bluebells, belting out a soul classic in 1962's 'I Sold My Soul to the Junkman', in the 70s she achieved a cult following with rock-soul goddesses Labelle, with the "gitchee-gitchee ya ya" vocals of 'Lady Marmalade'.

Winner in You isn't a million miles away from these early triumphs, she still has, rather she "is" that amazing voice that goes from a whisper to a scream. Each song is a showcase for her vocal talents, and emphasis is given to ballads like the fine single 'On My Own' and the stunning 'Oh, People'. The attempt to cross all markets finds her in MOR territory with the Broadway-styled 'There's a Winner in You', but it sure beats Streisand. The uptempo tracks like 'Something Special' are more rock orientated than soul, a la Tina Turner, and are no match for the beautiful ballads like 'Finally We're Back Together', partly written by 60s soul legend Chuck Jackson.

A fine album that finds Patti Labelle in a more relaxed mood,

less frantic and more self-confident. In poker terms, a real ace up the sleeve.

Kerry Buchanan

Cactus World News Urban Beaches MCA

The word is that in the absence of any true rock and roll leadership emerging from the present ranks of old hacks, then new bands like Dublin's Cactus World News could develop into the galvanizing force to lead the children back to the revolution.

Fat chance. Plagued by a patronage from fellow Dubliner U2's Bono Vox, which saw the band's first record, 'The Bridge' being released on U2's label, Mother Records, Cactus World News are four too serious young men who wear too many crosses on their sleeves. Guitarist/lyricist Eoin McEvoy's words are full of the expected spiritual and emotional traumas, images of 'Worlds Apart', 'In a Whirlpool', 'Church of the Cold' and 'State of Emergency'. Intense, heart-felt but just a shade too melodramatic to be credible.

The music is derived directly from the likes of U2, the Alarm, mediocre Echo and the Bunmen and Big Country, but lacks the latter's true Celtic lyricism or soul. The pick of the 10 tracks here has to be the conventional clout of 'In a Whirlpool' and 'Church of the Cold', which soars on one or two nifty guitar licks.

Down a gear and you're left with 'The Promise', which produces the odd chill, and 'State of Emergency' and 'Maybe This Time', two lengthy stabs at subtlety that can't maintain interest.

The top line is that Cactus World News are another bunch of emo-



Cactus World News

tional revolutionaries with the occasional good tune. Hardly enough to dry the powder, never mind take the barricades.

George Kay

Force MDs Chillin' WEA

Great cover, the Force MDs resplendent in about a ton of animal fur with lots of rings and gold things hanging around their necks. A tribute to pimp culture perhaps? But no solid gold coke spoons, because these are nice boys.

In fact they could be New Edition's older brothers on tracks like 'Will You Be My Girlfriend' and the schooldays' love of 'Uh Oh!'. There's a certain charm in this sort of corny soul, even real deep soul has a high degree of sentimentality. The classic here is 'Tender Love', a song I hated and now find very attractive, all strings and misty vocals.

Force MDs on this album are basically bubblegum, so it comes

as no surprise that the most bubblegum rap band appears on it. The Fat Boys are great, but when compared to LL Cool J and Run DMC, are strictly "wave your hand in the atmosphere" types. On 'Force MDs meet the Fat Boys' you get what you expect, jokes about popcorn and pizza and a nifty rap on the Hues Corporation's 'Rock the Boat' ...

"Don't rock the boat, Fat Boys Don't tip the boat over ..."

A good fun album, but nothing that's going to really rock the house.

Kerry Buchanan

Ryuichi Sakamoto Illustrated Musical Encyclopedia 10 Records

Sakamoto was one-third of the Yellow Magic Orchestra, a Japanese band whose influence on electronic music was possibly greater than attributed forefathers Kraftwerk. While Kraftwerk's lengthy compositions set precedents for Bowie's extended mood exercises on *Heroes*, and for German musicians Roedelius and Moebius, it was the Yellow Magic Orchestra that set the style for the whimsical three-minute pop song. Depeche Mode, Japan and Fad Gadget owe them much.

Sakamoto's own work is far smoother than contemporaries such as Yukihiro Takahashi or Sandii & the Sunsets. His sound track for *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence* had a heart and mood that stood him alongside Eno, but with the sentimental preciousness of Sylvian. *Illustrated Musical Encyclopedia* consolidates the feel of *Lawrence*, but without the technical restraints of a soundtrack score.

His compositional duet 'Fieldwork' with Thomas Dolby is powerful, but too obviously styled for the singles market to sit comfortably alongside the delicate 'Etude' and 'Tibetan Dance'. The pompously titled 'Zen-Gun' and 'In a Forest of Feathers' are instrumentals of great beauty and grace, too accessible to be dismissed as indulgent.

And lo, the YMO's sense of humour has not been lost. 'Steppin' Into Asia', with its chopstick-rap and *kawaii* vocal, is a cheerful delight. Maturity, calm and beauty fill *Illustrated Musical Encyclopedia* and bide Sakamoto well for the future.

Chad Taylor

Ry Cooder Blue City Warner Brothers Ry Cooder Crossroads Warner Brothers

Add *Alamo Bay* and that makes three new Cooder soundtracks in as many months. If they weren't soundtracks we'd probably be getting sceptical about things like quality control, or Cooder overextending himself. But we tend to have lower expectations of movie scores.

Ry Cooder knows these expectations but (partially) undermines them by giving us albums dominated by fully realized tracks and then comes out sounding like a winner. His last five LPs have been soundtracks and they've all had much to recommend them. The best instrumentals, such as the title themes from *Paris, Texas* and *Alamo Bay* resonate with movie memories and with an independent beauty.

Blue City's theme is not quite in

that class but it's certainly serviceable: hard-driving, electric and searingly melodic. Of the six other instrumentals, I'll swear one is a rip-off from 'Isa Lei' and a couple sound like Ry's been tuning his guitar to *Miami Vice*. (Hmm ... there's pastel tonings on the album sleeve too. Does this suggest the film's target audience?) Two of the album's four vocal numbers are fiery funk'n'roll, while the other two are one-listen throwaways (including Cooder half-smirking his way through Johnny Cash's 'Don't Take Your Guns to Town').

The *Crossroads* soundtrack is much less diverse. Virtually all the tracks are blues, and unlike *Blue City*, most are non-original. As well as his usual exemplary rhythm team Cooder employs a range of such fine musicians as blues legend Sonny Terry and the superb black vocalists who used to belong to Cooder's band in the days of *Bop Till You Drop*. The title track is the much-covered Robert Johnson standard (in a refreshingly different arrangement from the famous Cream version). A few of the other tracks — notably on side one — get a tad precious with the earnestness that stultified 1977's *Jazz* album. The rest however are a delight. There's an uptempo shuffle, a brooding mid-pacer sung by Amy Madigan (star of *Alamo Bay*) and a fine vocal group acapella.

If *Blue City* presents generally good value for a soundtrack — mixing a few worthwhile instrumentals with a couple of steaming rockers — *Crossroads* transcends the lowered expectations of the format and finds a focus fully independent of any movie.

Peter Thomson

BOB DYLAN APPRECIATION SOCIETY



P.O. BOX 3706 PARNELL AUCKLAND

Bob Dylan Appreciation Society GATHERING

Music: Videos: Photos

Come to the first event
organised for July 23

Ring

Jackie 444-7437
Viv 547-351

Great Looks Brilliant Performance



It's a Tokai of course

Distributed by CUSTOM MUSIC LTD PO Box 9648, Newmarket, Auckland.

BLUE BEAT

CLOTHES FOR
MEN &
WOMEN

BLEDISLOE ST (BEHIND CIVIC)

MAIL ORDER
BLACK
STOVE
PIPES

- NARROW LEG
- HEAVY COTTON
- REAR JET POCKET

\$55



WHOLESALE ENQUIRIES PH: 793-153

Send Name, Address, Money Order or Bank Cheque (No personal Cheques Please) to:
BLUE BEAT, C/- RIU, PO BOX 5689, AUCKLAND
STOVE PIPES: WAIST 26 28 29 30 31 32 34 36
PLEASE ADD \$2.50 P & P ON ALL ORDERS

Mockers Everything That Flies Beat Soldiers

All bookings & enquiries contact;

GROUP 3

ARTIST MANAGEMENT

PO BOX 47-299, PONSONBY, AUCKLAND. PH: 789-213

m a h i n a



clothesline conversation

MAHINA TOCKER's Album can be obtained from your Record shop or local 'O' Bookstore or by writing to: EMMATRUCK MUSIC, PO Box 53, Oneroa, Waiheke Island, enclosing \$12.50 (Includes postage)



AN EXCITING
MUSICAL FIRST!

WHOLESALE ENQUIRIES WELCOMED

The South Island Record & Music Fair

invites stall holders
from around New Zealand

Saturday August 9
Horticultural Hall
Christchurch

Bring, Buy, Sell, Exchange
Auction of rare records,
Musical instruments, Comics,
etc. Interested?

Phone (03) 485-916 or write
PO Box 6125, Christchurch.