

Joe Cocker
Cocker (Liberation)

On his last tour here (in '84) Joe's rendition of 'Inner City Blues' was the most beautiful tribute to Marvin Gaye I've yet heard. It floated above the rapt audience like a soul set free. Now on record the song's become earthbound. The arrangement is similar but heavier and turns hackneyed before the end. It's a problem indicative of the album. The original material is not particularly distinctive and the choice of cover songs generally uninspired. Only a rousing 'You Can Leave Your Hat On', emphasising Randy Newman's implied bump'n'grind, rises above the merely competent. So catch this number in the movie *9½ Weeks* and, if you haven't already done so, try Cocker's fine previous album, *Civilised Man*. PT

Brian Eno
More Blank than Frank (EG)

A compilation album from Eno and another high-art-in-the-marketplace project from EG; the album is packaged and released to coincide with the publication of Russell Mill's illustrations and collaborations with Eno, like-titled *More Dark than Shark*, a very beautiful and engaging book indeed (available from Faber and Faber). One track from his first album, two from his second and so on, carefully chosen to illustrate Eno's interests in ambient music (since *Discreet Music*) and also in the melancholic; treat your mum to 'Taking Tiger Mountain' and the charming 'On Some Faraway Beach'. Like all compilations, it's all too inadequate a treatment of his prolific output; more of a friendly launching to Mills' book than anything else. CT

Shriekback
The Infinite (Kaz)

The date says 1985 but this sounds old to me, including as it does the old, old 'All Lined Up' single and 'My Spine (is the Bass Line)'. Shriekback have always had a great talent for imagery and eeriness, and this LP shows that, but it lacks the angry glaze of *Oil and Gold*, the latter being up there with Led Zeppelin and Goethe. Interesting, but not gripping. CT

Propaganda
Wishful Thinking (ZTT EP)

Modern remixes are usually cold and uninteresting crap, a poor substitute for "versions" (live or otherwise), but Propaganda's

old-fashioned habit of writing good songs means that this EP is actually worthwhile. Includes versions of 'Dr Mabuse', 'P-Machinery' and Josef K's 'Sorry for Laughing', all with a constructive new angle. Hurry up with the new album, guys, you got a fan down here ... CT

Cawley and Storie (Riva)

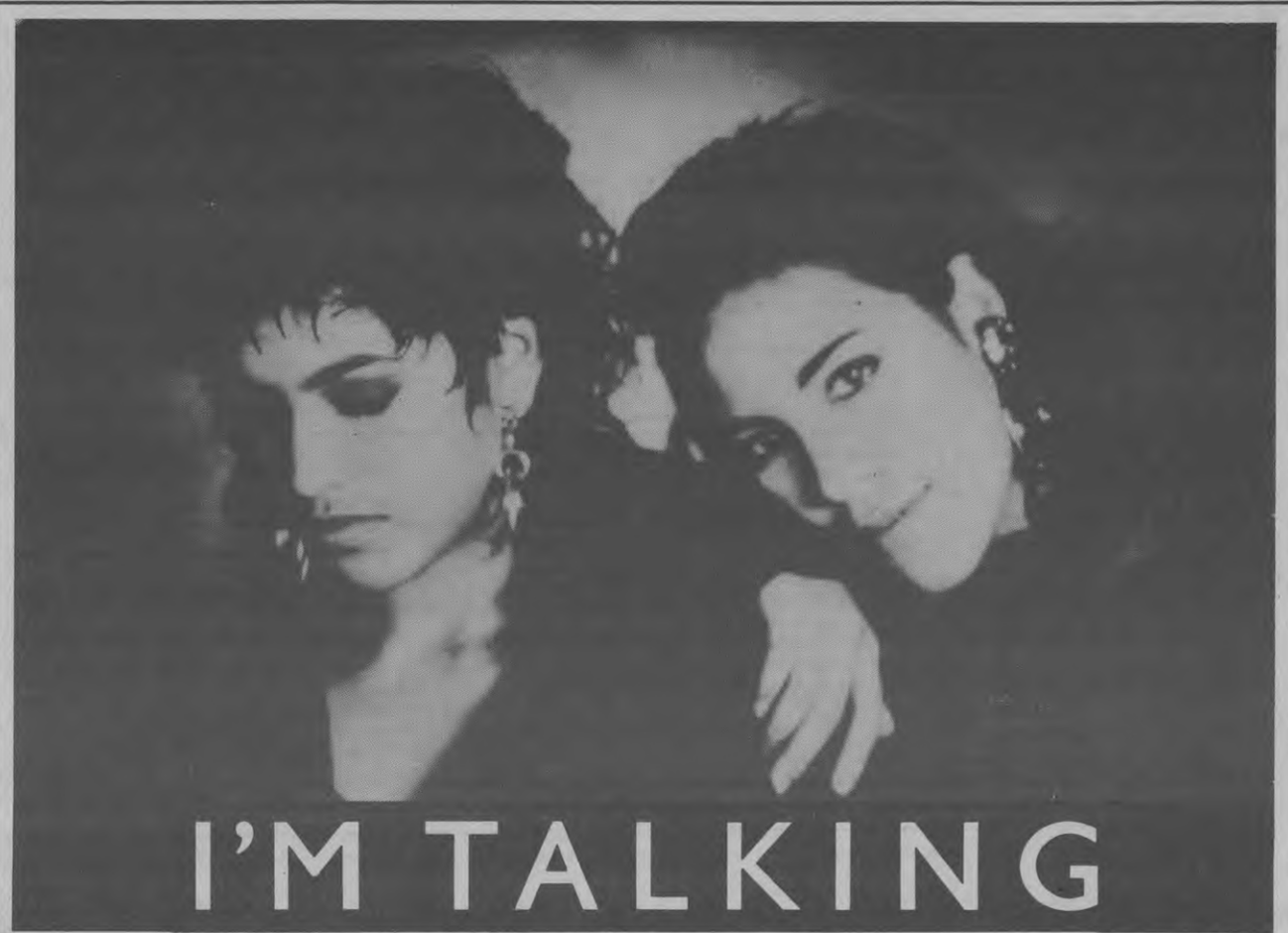
A very workmanlike debut album from two guys I've never heard of before, but apparently they've been playing around Indiana for the last 10 years or so. (Does that mean anything?) Mostly ballady type numbers, neither are great voices, but the feel is there, probably helped a lot by the likes of great session players like Pino Paladino, Geoff Whitehorn, Henry Spinetti and also Mel Collins on a couple of tracks. Reminds me a lot of Dirk Hamilton, and although not as good, I still like this album a lot. It gets better every listening, which means it'll probably be a favourite in a couple years! GC

Microdisney
The Clock Comes Down the Stairs (CBS)

They're an Irish-English band who've been around a while and are well-liked by the English press. *The Clock Comes Down the Stairs* is their first local release — those in the know say that earlier imports are far superior. Their's is a sort of wistful pop, leaning on the "wistful" to the point of boredom — singer Blah Blah sounds better transformed into a female at 45rpm than he does at 33. 'Horse Overboard' and most of the lyrics are fine, but that's all. B for Boring. Nah. Z for Zzzzz ... PM

Siouxsie and the Banshees
Tinderbox (Polydor)

Six LPs down the line (I think — who's counting anyway?) and downhill all the way. Budgie's still a cool (if a tad predictable) drummer, but the rest is just predictable. Gloom, gloom, gloom, the 'Candyman' sells heroin to the kids "and the children, he warns, 'don't tell!'." I saw *It Came From Outer Space* too, and this guy says that at exactly 92 degrees Fahrenheit people snap — not 91 or 93, but exactly 92 — and do terrible things. Like write songs about it, eh Siouxsie? I say all the life is long gone out of this band and let them die in peace. But first, crush their delusions by not buying this record. PM



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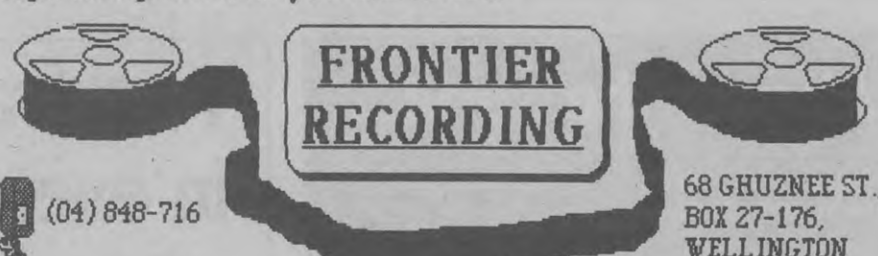
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