

Records

Sneaky Feelings Sentimental Education Flying Nun

With the accent on the "sentimental" in education, the second Sneaky Feelings album is launched with 'All You've Done' and 'I'm Not Going to Let Her Bring Me Down,' nice full sound, pop songs for the discerning listener. But are they? I don't like it till John Kelcher's 'Walk to the Square,' but by the time *that's* finished, I'm turned right round ...

The infectious Latin shuffle 'Now' is followed by 'A Letter to You' and the old fave 'Broken Man,' two Matthew Bannister songs rocking out in incredibly nice fashion. Boogie over to the turntable and flip it over ...

The whole thing may be too smooth, too refined for some, but *Sentimental Education* has reaffirmed my faith in the Sneakys. The muddled 'Better than Before' had me worried, but they've settled down and really *know* what they're doing now, excelling at guitar pop with subbed trimmings,

and that's shown by the confidence and maturity with which they attack reworkings of two further oldies, on the second side, 'Amnesia' and 'Backroom' from the Dunedin EP.

'Amnesia' works especially well, still choppy, but newly country-fied, developing into an extended workout that closes the album superbly, coming after the sublimely smooth 'Coming True,' and proving that a Sneaky Feelings education, sentimental as it may well be, is well worth having.

The Temptations 25th Anniversary Motown

I can't believe this album exists. An innovative collection from the Motown vaults, a label known for its boring approach to its priceless catalogue, repackaging the same hits repetitively. This double album is not a greatest hits collection but what compiler Leonard Pitts Jr describes as a "retrospective" — four tracks (two unreleased) pre-dating their chart success, three live tracks, six more unreleased tracks and seven more familiar Tempts gems — all in chronological order.

The compiler has a refreshing "party" perspective — all the

tracks are as good or better than some Motown chose to issue at the time and the three live tracks are kick-arse live soul, particularly the seven-minute 'Papa Was a Rolling Stone,' previously only released in Japan.

It's ironic that 'Wherever I Lay My Hat' (vocal by Paul Williams) would probably have never surfaced had not Paul Young chosen to cover the Marvin Gaye original. Why songs such as 'Come to Me,' 'Soulmate' and 'Thanks to You' were not released earlier is crazy.

Let's hope this is the start of a series as Leonard Pitts Jr avoids the stuffy approach of British soul elitists and has created a lively mindboggling album for fans that's an ideal intro to Motown's premier vocal group. Liner notes assess their career, background each track and profile the 14 singers who have *all* given their best to this 25-years-in-the-making vocal institution.

Murray Cammick

U2 The Joshua Tree Island

It's nearly three years since *The Unforgettable Fire*, the album that parted U2 from the death-or-glory sound of their first three long-play-

ers and, fortunately for them, since then rock and roll has limped along, allowing U2 the luxury of releasing the *Joshua Tree* into a scene that hasn't exactly left them behind in their absence.

The new album is a continuation of that departure, a confirmation that U2 have grown into a band that can do more than just holler at the moon. With Eno again aboard for the ride and Larry Mullen adding keyboards, the band stretch out on 'Bullet the Blue Sky,' and on 'Running to Stand Still' the understatement makes the anti-drug message more effective.

Old U2 clichés get aired on 'In God's Country' where the Edge's guitar chimes and Bono sings of rivers running dry but on 'Where the Streets Have No Name,' 'I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For' and 'With or Without You' the band has found a safe middle ground between past dynamics and newer textures. And of special interest is 'One Tree Hill,' which despite Bono's hackneyed imagery, makes a moving tribute to New Zealander Greg Carroll.

The Joshua Tree won't convert any non-believers, U2's appeal is too well entrenched for that, but if you're interested enough or tolerant enough, there's music

here that could survive the three years until their next album.
George Kay

Headless Chickens Flying Nun

I've got this half-baked theory that goes something along the lines that it's the bands like the Headless Chickens, not the 'paisley underground' or whatever name they go by this week, who are the new "psychedelia." According to my theory, Pere Ubu could be the greatest psychedelic band ever — but I'm not sure that they are, so my theory founders, or is left floundering, as the case may be.

The Headless Chickens steal the best bits from everything: a heavy dose of morbid surrealism, nursery rhymes, surf pop, the aforementioned psychedelia and lotsa brutal noise — all thrown into a dance best heard on a stereo like Duncan's, one with speakers four feet high ...

The Headless Chickens *control* everything so well on their self-titled album. The repression and occasional claustrophobic precision of their work has a paradoxical purging or releasing effect — maybe you had to be there at the Nitpickers Picnic or that awesome weekend at the Rising Sun to witness the power at its absolute zenith, but this record comes pretty close to being a realisation of the power that "rock" can call up. Yep, it's up there with Husker Du ...

'Monkey Jar' begins "whispered secrets pin me to the ground" and gains momentum till it opens onto a riff that sucks you right inside. Johnny Pierce's 'Axe' demonstrates the precision that they're capable of, delightful organ humming in the background and a clockwork Casiotone-type melody. 'The Slice' and 'Hedge Song' both contain homemade nursery rhymes and wicked chants, with 'Hedge Song's opening being a

psychedelic mess of backwards tapes and voices, tumbling into a whine of violins and voices screaming, cackling "here it comes ..."

'Totalling Dad's Car' is insanely catchy, with a gleeful chorus of "We could wreck Dad's car / And put ourselves in traction." 'Agit Pop,' a bizarre tirade 15 lines (and not too many more seconds) in length, more high-speed "light relief," well *musical* anyway, before the eerie opening of 'The Ghost of Some Cold Street' — marching feet keep time while a pop song tries to get out at a funeral.

It culminates Chris Matthews' (for want of a better description) "cinematic" lyrical technique, a gallery of mostly grotesque characters, lurching up to leer at the camera/listener, before turning back to resume their tasks at hand. Its themes run throughout the record — Uncle Joe goes back to putting his hand in the toaster, Grandma Kay will die of her fear of neighbours, the pet pig Rafi goes back to being a surrogate chicken, and Pierre the fornicator ... well I guess he's fallen back on Miss Mariana by the end.

Meanwhile, Matthews is just left with the pain that "I was a fool not to leave / in a wooden box marked FRAGILE." These people can be fun and terrifying to observe, and they're part of a nebulous family stretching back through 'Mr Tic Toc' (This Kind of Punishment, *Five by Four*), 'The Sleepwalker' (*Beard of Bees*), 'Washed Away's Aunty Jack and further in the hazy past of Childrens Hour.

Headless Chickens blends parts of Chris Matthews, Johnny Pierce and Michael Lawry, and *ourselves*. It's a carnival and a house of horrors, claustrophobic, life, maybe art, maybe that psychedelia I was talking about, maybe ... *definitely* good.

Paul McKessar



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THE JAYREM RECORDS COUNTDOWN

THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH		
1	NEW	Trick of the Light Putty In Her Hands	JAY-140
2	2	He Waiata Mo Te Iwi Aotearoa	JAY-327 TC-JAY-327
3	1	Reggae Blasters Vol. 2 Various Artists	GETI-11 TC-GETI-11
4	NEW	Mary Yandall & Rodger Fox Mary Yandall/Rodger Fox	CIRCULAR-11 TC-CIRC-11
5	16	Make Room Luke Hurley	JAY-324 TC-JAY-324
6	5	Robert the Record ?Fog City Enterprises	ROBERT 1/500
7	3	Attack From Down Unda Various NZ Heavy Metal IMPORT	RRLP-103 RRLC-103
8	NEW	Jah Magic Sticks & Shanty	JAY-326 TC-JAY-326
9	8	Mona With The Children Doug Cameron	SNAP-1203
10	13	Walkin' Together Rodger Fox & Mike Booth	CIRCULAR-10 TC-CIRC-10
11	NEW	No More War Dread Beat & Blood	JAY-141 TC-JAY-141
12	-	Top Of The Town Screaming Tribesmen	RAT-1202
13	7	Just Friends Rodger Fox with Bill Reichenbach & Gary Grant	CIRCULAR-9 TC-CIRC-9
14	12	Sweet Bitter Love Marcia Griffiths IMPORT	TRLS-94
15	NEW	Destroy Dull-City Psychotic Turnbuckles	RAT-1201
16	22	Que Sera, Sera Johnny Thunders	AIM-1007
17	19	Weird Culture, Weird Custom National Student Radio Compilation	NSR-001 TC-NSR-001
18	NEW	The Original Smiley Culture	GETI-12 TC-GETI-12
19	14	Buckle In The Rail Chad's Tree	FINE-1
20	-	Capitol Kaos Various Artists	KAOS-111

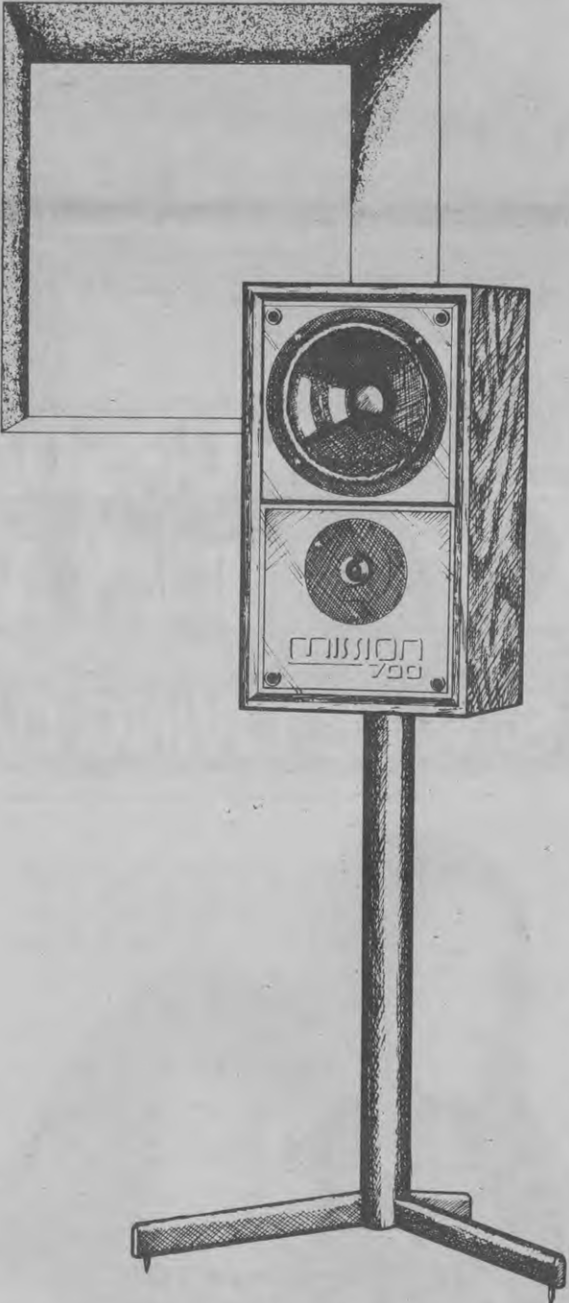


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