

RECORDS

Metal Church The Dark (WEA)

When Metal Church say they're gonna hit ya like a ton of bricks, they're not kidding. You know all about it as soon as the Seattle five-piece start the fire and speed along in the manner of Metallica. In fact 'Watch the Children Pray' could almost be the track 'Sanitarium,' and vocalist David Wayne sounds not unlike Udo (ex-Accept). If you like those two bands you'll definitely be into this ominous album of fast tight riffing, and want to join the congregation. GD

Nightranger Big Live (WEA)

The reason Nightranger have never made any impact at all here is probably because they're such an all-American radio oriented rock band. Unfortunate really, because there's quite a bit of talent in this quintet, especially in the guitar department. Brad Ellis helped out Ozzy on the "Talk of the Devil" tour, and between him and Jeff Watson they do some good in-

terplaying. Underneath the keyboards and choruses there's material like 'Rain Come Crashing Down' and others which deserve a listen at least. GD

Heart Bad Animals (EMI)

A polished selection of new songs crafted around the well-trained vocals of the lovely Wilson sisters. Anne's trademark high-octave voice is strong as ever, complemented by Nancy's singing and Ovation guitar playing. Over half of *Bad Animals* is covers that mostly do work for Heart, but they're in their element on the originals like the great title track, which engulfs the listener into a city and its nightlife. GD

Metallica Kill 'Em All (WEA)

The kind of band you either love or hate immensely, and those in the "love" category will probably already have bought an import copy already, since it was released overseas in 1983. If not, this is your chance to get the first Metallica album and hear the raw fury that has since captured the eager following of the restless and reckless youth of today. Bassist Cliff Burton, who was killed in a tour bus

accident last year, features on 'Anaesthesia Pulling Teeth,' with a frantic solo. The rest is head-banging speed metal to the hilt. GD

Robin Trower Passion (Festival)

Robin Trower still plays that Hendrix-style slow blues rock, but then no one would really want it any other way. Also on *Passion* is the vocal talents of Davey Pattison, who used to be in Gamma (whaddaya mean, you've never heard of them?) Alternatively, this record can be played either first thing in the morning to slowly wake up to, or late at night to quickly drift off to sleep. GD

LIVE

Straitjacket Fits Oriental, Dunedin, June 12

Caught the second half of the Benders' set, a five-piece with much guitar-swapping and pop

nicities. They had some up dancing but were too often strained for me (though being a sucker for songs about superheroes, I clapped warmly enough at the end).

The big guns took their time in wheeling out. Nigh-on 10pm before they appear on stage. The large crowd's expectant, but many are unprepared for the ensuing volume ... Loud enough for Shayne Carter to take a hand-count halfway through: "Is it too loud?" The answer's yes, but they promise to turn it up. Songs transcend what's created onstage. Interplayed guitars sing infrastructures of their own. Sounds good ...

The unique Carter whine wraps itself around 'Marianne,' straining it to places that Leonard Cohen doesn't dare dream of, then careers through 'She Speeds.' There's a harmony of sorts with Andrew Brough, but tonight it's their guitars that are hurting ears. John Collie leads an unexpected run through the *Dangerman* theme and the pain in the back of my head takes me back to some children's hour.

Now having seen the Straitjacket Fits several times in several

different towns this year, I have to agree with one who knows: they just get better every time; louder too, methinks. When it comes! shall have to find some loud place to play their *Life In One Chord*. 'Twill be good.
Paul McKessar

Rhubarb Collective, Camelias, Prodigies Old Star, Christchurch, June 27

With the demise of the Gladstone as the haven of local original music things looked rather bleak until the Old Star Tavern reopened its doors and asked us in to cram round their open fire. Tonight was part two of a "Six Pack Weekend," with three bands per night. First up was the Rhubarb Collective. They have a melodic 60s-ish sound, slightly heavy on the bass but incorporating some interesting ideas such as the use of recorder on a couple of songs. They started the night off quietly but built things up, and soon had people on the dance floor as their guitarist launched into a few Hendrix-styled guitar licks. The Camelias have developed

their sound enormously in the year or so they've been together, and right from the start one could imagine one was listening to Jesus & Mary Chain's Reid brothers rather than Christchurch's Ford brothers. Slightly more subtle than J&MC, the Camelias switched from slow songs to full on bar-rages, possibly too quickly, only marred by technical hitches with the PA. With songs as good as 'Pride' (no, not that one!) the Camelias could be a band to keep an eye on.

1987 looks like being a good year for the Prodigies, with new bassist Alan Clark injecting some needed humour and energy into the band. Heading off with the Latin-tinged instrumental 'Under the Bunka,' they ran through a good set of Prodigie originals, and a few well suited covers such as REM's 'Superman,' before ending the night with a very odd (read: messy) version of the Easybeats' 'Sorry.'

Overall, a great night of local talent enhanced by the sight of a venue full of people dancing to local bands — certainly worth \$6.
John Greenfield

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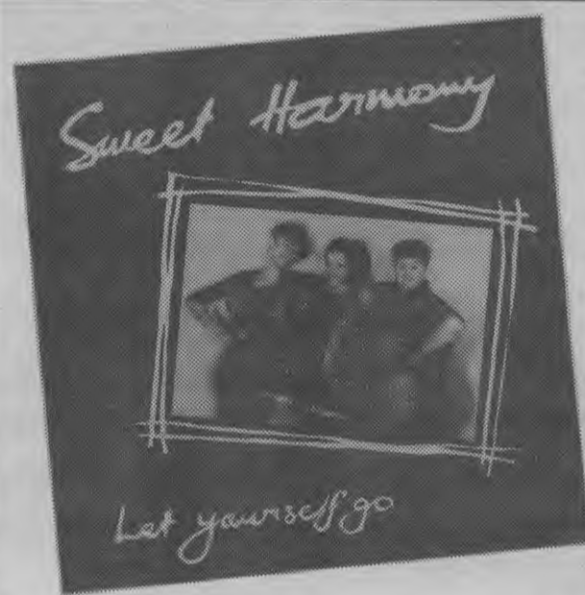
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