

much — the best way to get on with people is not to insult them.

The Psychodaisies were the final band of the night, and although I have thought them decidedly average in the past, this night they were quite exceptional. Their stage antics were highly entertaining without being self-indulgent (something that a lot of Auckland bands could learn from) and the new guitarist (also from Smegma) was excellent, his Townsend-like style complementing the punchy rhythm section. It would be nice to hear a lot less cover and a lot more originals, but for a good night out, without being too cerebral, the Psychodaisies would take a lot of beating.

MARK BLAIR

#### HEADLESS CHICKENS, DRONE

**Rising Sun, October 25**

Drone are an Auckland trio with an approach to things musical that would fit more comfortably alongside the NZSO than your average pop band. Tonight the word "average" would be of little use, however, except as a description of the gin and tonic served to me by a very green barman.

And so it was that Drone took the stage in front of a strangely subdued but ever growing crowd on this particular Saturday night. After a disturbing period where it looked as if they weren't getting it together at all, they came to a piece called 'Music For Guitars and Pianos.' Ah... now the band locks together and in the space of one (excellent) song the audience is captured hook, line and seriously worn leather jacket. Drone are best when they are driving drums and guitars, dare I say they have overtones of the Cocteau Twins in places, and that's nothing to be ashamed of in my books. I couldn't help thinking there must be a better environment for a band like Drone to be playing in, away from the expectations of "the pub" — a theatre, perhaps. Meanwhile we patiently await their forthcoming album.

Rumours had been flying about the Headless Chickens all night but I couldn't believe that keyboard player Mike Lawry had joined the Rolling Clones and would be jumping ship in Australia to tour with them. Bassist Grant Fell angrily denied any knowledge when confronted but as he stormed off I noticed a double-pass to Wildlife tucked discreetly into his back pocket.

The crowd seemed to forget all this, however, as the band plunged into a

near-perfect version of 'Slice'. Throughout the evening it became apparent that the almost pop overtones of *Stunt Clown* were in considerable contrast to all the other songs both old and especially new. Yes folks, this band is getting *heavier* rather than softer and the crowd knew it as they smashed into 'Room With A View', 'Crash Hot' and the dancefloor tune 'Railway Surfing'.

But the Headless Chickens are more than an aural sensation, visually they are ahead of any local act seen in recent times. Stuart Page from Brilliant Film Company was in charge of two 16mm projectors running simultaneously on the back of stage projecting everything from a brain in a glass jar to Rupert E. Taylor in drag.

With the standard of performance that the Headless Chickens have achieved they should have no trouble impressing our Australian cousins across the ditch and by the time you are reading this, they will be on their way back from a three-week tour and will be playing dates her soon afterwards. My advice is to catch this band and enjoy them real soon because it probably won't be long before we have to share them with the rest of the world.

GREG JOHNSON

## Tapes

#### VARIOUS NZ ARTISTS

#### An Interesting Matter

(Loaded)

Loaded Tapes is the latest step on The Beads' road to world domination. This compilation presents a good selection of the label's bands, from the authentic garage grunge of the Osterburgs to the semi-acoustic avant-garde of Perkin's Mauve. All the songs were recorded on a Fostex four-track, with the exceptions of Skeletal Froth, recorded at BFM, and Silver Dream Rocket, captured live at Knox Hall. This band has since mutated into a multi-coloured ten-piece named Weta-A-Go-Go.

The highlight of this tape comes from the classic love triangle of boy, guitar and drum machine. 'Repo Man' by Captain Rackett and the Dream Machine is a raw piece of junk art in the spirit of its cinematic namesake.

An *Interesting Matter* indeed; a wide-ranging factory sampler promising an extremely bright future.

MATTHEWHYLAND

#### LOUD LOUNGE

#### Nine Songs

(Loaded)

Formerly the Big Bad Bastid Band, this Auckland three-piece are not so much loud as relentlessly inventive, with each of the nine songs sounding quite distinctive. Among the highlights are 'Long Way', a witty perspective on not doing the shopping, and 'Sandcastles', a vaguely industrial song featuring two guitars and no bass.

The dark forces that have thus far kept the group out of more sophisticated studios must be curbed at once, as the low budget recording of this tape, while clear enough, doesn't really do justice to the quality of the songs. Until the 48-track megamix hits the shop floor, though, this collection of infectious pop observations will do nicely, thank you.

MATTHEWHYLAND

## Singles

#### ANITA BAKER

#### Giving You The Best That I've Got

(Elektra) 7"

Ms Baker makes a wondrous return, taken from the new album that reaches the same heights as *Rapture*. The main cut is unflinchingly non-commercial, minimal backing and the jazz tinges of her voice up front. Good to see she didn't ask Stock-Aitken-Waterman to do a remix.

My favourite single of the month.

#### JOAN JETT & THE BLACKHEARTS

#### I Hate Myself For Loving You

(Festival) 7"

My second favourite has to be Ms Jett in a self-reflective mood. Based around classic glitterband rhythms and pounding Sandy Nelson drum beats. She's got style and history on her side.

#### UPPER HUTT POSSE

#### E Tu / Intervention

(Jayrem)

Local release of historic importance. Maori music is probably heard more by American tourists than actual Maoris, due to the nature of the industry. Offset by releases like the *Ngati* soundtrack, Dalvanius, Aotearoa, and a few others. But this is something different, the first New Zealand rap record, and the first to stress the militancy of Maori history and future. It's a record for Maori

people to be proud of, and realise we've come a long way from Lou and Simon's 'I Want To Live In A-Maori-Car'. Buy it and listen to it.

#### DEAD OR ALIVE

#### Turn Around And Count 2 Ten

(Epic) 7" (Censored cover)

12" (exposed tattoo on buttock cover)

Should keep aerobics instructors going for a long while. Funny how what used to be gay hi-energy records have become the sort of thing middle-class people use to get rid of fat.

#### TONY STONE

#### This Is Serious

(Festival) 12"

Darling of the English club scene, it seems, and it does have that Euro-pop feel beloved by some of our English friends. But I reckon we don't need anymore Rick Astleys at the moment, because we now have Jason (Kylie's main squeeze) Donovan's new single.

#### YAZZ

#### The Only Way Is Up

(RCA) 7" & 12"

The voice from Coldcut's 'Doctorin the House' in a master disco jam. Open hi-hat rules the beat here just like those 70s disco operas, the vocal rhythms remind me of classic Abba and I don't think you'd find a better pop dance number. No. 1 with a bullet.

#### TRANSVISION VAMP

#### Revolution Baby

(WEA) 7" & 12"

Anything with a lyric like "We're all on the same side when the mushroom hits the sky" gets my support. Another stab at [pop culture stardom from Ms Wendy with the help of T-Rex riffs and big production.

#### BLOW MONKEYS

#### This Is Your House

(RCA) 7" & 12"

Wonderful Acid House mix of Dr Robert being socially aware. The Straight version can be found on the 7" and is a classic Blow Monkeys groove but this remix is startling stuff, with the evil-est Acid bass this side of Ecstasy.

#### GOOD QUESTION

#### Got A New Love

(WEA) 12"

It had to happen, the black Bros. As if Bill Cosby donated his sperm to science and they created this pop culture icon. Not exactly scaling the heights of musical excitement but still a fun, if

cluttered groove.

#### TRACIE SPENCER

#### Symptoms Of True Love

(EMI) 7" & 12"

Billie Holiday fan and 13 year-old winner of America's *Star Search* Tracie makes her vinyl debut in fine style with this dance track. I like it because it comes on hard, and not over the top on the cutesie-pie meter.

#### DEEPAK AND KHAN

#### Holle, Holle

(Circa) 12"

Indian House music no less, with the Indian Acid Trip version being the better, but not too strong on the Acee. Maybe it needed some funky up sitars, or something. Taken from Mark Kamen's *United House Nations* project, bringing together House from around the world and uniting us under one big groove of love, baby.

#### BOMB THE BASS

#### Megablast

(RCA) 7" & 12"

As Mean Gene used to say on the wrestling, "so much (pause) happening." A disc crammed full of ideas and fun. If it's beats you want, you've come to the right place, and cuts aplenty. The other side features a mighty Miami sound, Latin hip-hop with a strong female vocal. There is life after 'Beat Dis'. And anyway, how come they've replaced Mean Gene with a yuppie? It's great the way he talks just like Gene, though.

#### GLEN GOLDSMITH

#### Save A Little Bit

(RCA) 7" & 12"

British funk has gone into high gear this year, what with Derek B, Wee Papa Girl Rappers, Pasadenas and this guy. Taken from his hot debut and mixed as smooth as ice cream. Best thing about it is the original sound, both in his voice and production, not just a slavish American copy.

KERRY BUCHANAN

#### CASSANDRA'S EARS

#### Private Wasteland

(Jayrem)

Cassandra's Ears will never appeal to the seething masses because, like Microdisney and the Go Betweens, their music needs to be fully enjoyed. They've been compared to Look Blue Go Purple but their vocal harmonies and modulation of volume are more reminiscent of a less angst-ridden Straitjacket Fits. There's also a subtle jazz element in some of the music, particularly in the sax playing on 'My Command' and Flick Rhind's unique bass style.

This EP has a rare warmth to it. It may not move mountains but it's well worth exploring.

MATTHEWHYLAND



CASSANDRA'S EARS

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