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Records

Tex Pistol Nobody Else (Pagan)

When Ian Morris as Tex Pistol released his 1987 EP with 'The Game of Love' hit single, 'I Don't Know What Came Over Me' and the 'Ballad of Buckskin Bob', Tex made it clear that he's not an artist to take too seriously. 'The Game of Love' was a joke when it was written, 'Come Over Me' is a C&W piss-take and even 'Ballad of Buckskin Bob' is unequivocally tongue in cheek.

Now after two number one singles the most recent being 'Nobody Else' with Tex's earnest kid brother and the Telethon style video, there's a danger that Tex is gonna be considered a serious artist. A mistake.

If you take Tex seriously, an unbridgeable dichotomy exists between his more straight-forward reworks of other artists compositions such as 'Sitting in the Rain', 'Hands of My Heart', 'Seventh Son / Cool Jerk' and his own bad taste country and western piss-takes such as 'My Old Friend' or 'Come Over Me' or the Shadows jam with Fleetwood 'Catching the Tide' (a funny — peculiar or hilarious — track that starts side two).

You have to look for the humour in the well-produced rework of 'Sitting in the Rain' formerly done by Auckland's Underdogs in the 60s or Tex's remake of Daggy & the Dickheads 'Winter' with its Bonanza-ish guitar solo. [Ironically, ex Underdogs member Murray Grindlay also composes advertising for a living and like Ian Morris, has had a hit under a pseudonym — Monte Video.] The only track I can't perceive a bit of humour in is 'Hands of My Heart', a

song best left to the Warratahs who probably recorded the definitive version on their Pagan LP.

Ian Morris has had some fun here, as a producer, at one moment his country evokes *Some Girls* Rolling Stones and on 'Seventh Son / Cool Jerk' medley (tracks known by their Georgie Fame and Capitols versions), Ian has deftly recreated the dynamics of an Allen Toussaint produced Lee Dorsey session and this track moves into the more straight-forward R&B boogie of 'W11 to Whanarua Bay'.

There's only one way to take this album seriously, as a party record, but I suggest buying the CD and reprogramme into party order — put all the poppy rockers on one side and leave the country until everybody's drunk enough or more than enough.

Has Tex Pistol landed on his feet with this his debut album? He must have, as his empty boots are hiding on the back cover. I suspect next time those shit-kickin' country pickin' boots will be on the front cover — with Tex in them. **MURRAY CAMMICK**

GAIL ANN DORSEY The Corporate World (WEA)

In what has been a very good year for women singer-songwriters, Gail Ann Dorsey is up against some very tough competition. The big test is to achieve uniqueness. Dorsey doesn't lack talent but she is wanting in originality. She invites comparisons too easily and doesn't seem able to rise above them. Where she shows class, she lacks consistency. *The Corporate World* is a competent debut, but in this league, competency is not enough.

Recorded on both sides of the Atlantic, the album mixes both US and



Gail Ann Dorsey

UK soul with rock influences. It's probably here that the identity crisis begins. Dorsey never seems able to settle on an idea long enough to see it through. She comes across at various points as a grown-up Whitney Houston, a raunchy Sade or a laid-back Grace Jones.

The opener, 'Wasted Country' has a naggingly familiar vocal refrain, as does 'Just Another Dream'. Both will be right at home on FM radio. The title track's bleak view of monetarism has more attack and is thus more impressive. It also features a nice line in pithy irony: *Time is money and money is mine / Keep up with me or I'll leave you behind.*

Of the rest, 'Wishing I Was Someone Else' hints at directions Dorsey would do well to develop further, her acoustic guitar the only instrument, allowing appropriate space for a gritty song about envy. She also has a deft touch

with romantic ballads, 'If Only You' just taking second place to 'Carry Me Off To Heaven'. This album closer features a most precise piece of inspiration. The Supremes were content to hear a symphony, Dorsey hears Beethoven's Sonata No. 14, Opus 27. The fact that she can write this into the lyrics and deliver such a line with grace is all to her credit.

In any other year, Gail Ann Dorsey would probably make a much bigger splash. But the standards have already been set by others and *The Corporate World* doesn't display enough inventiveness. Low marks also for the insipid cover art. **DUNCAN CAMPBELL**

THE TRAVELING WILBURYS Volume One (Wilbury)

Just when an encyclopaedia of oldies are producing their best work in years, they let this quintet out of the sunset home. I'll debate with anyone the strength of Dylan, Lynne, Petty, Harrison and Orbison, but the Traveling Wilburys should have remained as mythical as the Million Dollar Quartet, wheeled out for each other's weddings. Their unique styles sound as if they've been put through a blender, and the result is an LP of songs-by-committee and spot the riff arrangements. Despite Jeff Lynne's attempts to tart it up, it all wears thin very quickly. The sad part is, it doesn't sound like the sessions (held at Dave and Siobhan Stewart's L.A. pad) were much fun. And that that's the crux of it: none of the participants have the ebullient personalities required for this type of gig. If there was one great song, a single might have worked, but this is regrettable. **CHRIS BOURKE**

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