

Harvey Live, Bad Company's first album, Nazareth's *Greatest Hits*, Prince's *Sign Of The Times*, three Mott the Hooples, Pink Floyd and Led Zep's first album."

What about new bands?

"I like Badlands, formed by Jake E Lee who used to be in Ozzy's band. I like the new Blue Murder album — I'm a big admirer of John Sykes' guitar playing. I like a band called the Sea Hags and the Circus of Power a bit."

What band would you like The Cult to be classed alongside?

"The Who — probably the greatest rock n' roll band in the world. But not in their mod period."

Around the time of *Live At Leeds* and *Who's Next*?

"Yeah, they're the albums I've got, funnily enough. I had them when I was 14 and I bought them again."

"We're touring as a four-piece again — guitar, bass, drums and singing, and I often say to people that the Who and Led Zep made plenty of noise with that lineup. You don't need two guitar players. On stage we don't try to re-create the album and in fact the live performance is truer to the original naked forms of the songs than the album versions."

"But we want to keep up that tradition of all those bands like the Who coming out of Britain. Guns n' Roses are American. I feel good that we're the one band out of England right now who're young enough in the market place to hold the tradition of the Who. There's Def Leppard, U2 and us — and we're the new kids on the block."

GEORGE KAY

## Records

### Dancing Gill

#### NENEH CHERRY Raw Like Sushi (Virgin)

What's in a word? Dancing used to be about jam and chocolate, doing the popcorn — sweet sticky stuff that rots your teeth. Now dancing's about sushi — sharp and white and packed with protein, rich and neatly sliced.

What's in a beat? A lot. Stylistically, Neneh Cherry is the woman-child of Jam & Lewis — clean hard beats per minute that give machines a good name. But she's English so this is conceptual: like that Sushi title, this album highlights its heritage. The ice-breaking 'Buffalo Stance' swiped from Malcolm McLaren, and ever since then it's been hard to think of Neneh without thinking of *Fans* and the characters therein — mulatto mistresses crooning over opera stars, mixing up funk and soul with an art-director's eye. Neneh Cherry reminds me of the singer on *Fans*' title track. And a little of Grace Jones' *Slave To The Rhythm* album, a persona fleshed out and funkied up by the complex production machinery behind her.

*Raw Like Sushi* belts it out, crosses over hip-hop, electro and house (not that difficult, you just turn the dial) and ends up with the severe, sometimes harsh mish-mash that is modern dance. It's strong on melody but that's ironic since it will ultimately be judged on its rhythms, which are complex and busy. Tim Simenon shares production credits with Booga Bear and Phil Chill. 'Manchild' is a nice slice of melancholy; 'Phoney Ladies' and 'Love Ghetto' talk tuff, and just for the record 'Outre Risque Locomotive' (apart from being danceable) is the best song title in the world.

I like the conceptual pointers on this album: the Baptiste-Mondino cover, the McLaren steals, the tuff 'Buffalo Stance', the confidence, the strident politicking and the Betty Page brassiere. Neneh Cherry is a tough bitch for the 80s, and I'll happily get down to this album for the decade's remaining six months.

CHAD TAYLOR



Neneh Cherry

#### LUCINDA WILLIAMS Lucinda Williams (Rough Trade)

Forget about all the other little girls with their serious haircuts and their parents' Patsy Cline and Joan Baez records, here's the real thing.

Growing up in the hills of Arkansas and the Louisiana flatlands, refining her craft in coffee shops, bars, motel lounges and prestigious songwriters' testing grounds like Texas's legendary Kerville Folk Festival, Lucinda Williams has developed her own totally distinctive blend of country, blues and folk.

Although this isn't her first album (she released two on the Folkways label in 1979 and 1981), it's the one where she's realised the perfect setting for her remarkable voice and songs. Made for just \$10,000, with faultless support from her band (Gurf Morlix on guitar, Dr John Ciambotti on bass, Donald Lindley on drums), the album grabs you by the scruff of the neck and never lets go.

From the opening track, the current single 'I Just Wanted To See You So Bad' to the wonderful Springsteen-ish 'The Night's Too Long' through 'Changed The Locks' and finally ending up with a blistering version of Howling Wolf's 'I Asked For Water (He Gave Me Gasoline)', the whole thing is total class.

There have been some great country albums released over the last 12



Lucinda Williams

months, but they don't come any better than this. And check out the 12", which features two live acoustic tracks.

GRANT McCALLUM

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS Rainbow Warriors (RCA/Greenpeace)

This is one hell of a cause and, even at a casual glance, a hell of a good (double) compilation LP. Appearing are well known campaigners like the Eurythmics ('When Tomorrow Comes'), Simple Minds ('Waterfront'), Peter Gabriel ('Red Rain') and Lou Reed ('Last Great American Whale') and Sting ('Love Is The Seventh Wave'). These performers have perhaps reached the 'Empathy Burnout' level, (a term coined by Bob Geldof around the time of Live Aid) but they're lived up by the presence of Talking Heads ('City Of Dreams'), Bryan Ferry ('Don't Stop The Dance'), REM ('It's The End Of The World As We Know It') and even the Waterboys ('The Whole Of The Moon'). Everyone's come to the party: check out Belinda Carlisle, U2, Dire Straits, Aswad, Basia, Sade and still more.

The title has a poignancy for New Zealand, not only in the wake of the terrorist sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*. We've watched Pacific atolls crack and rot after nuclear testing since the 70s, and we're suffering under a weakened ozone layer. We're also the last petrol stop before Antarctica, a

continent they're lining up to mine.

Like Lou Reed said, you'd have to be pretty stupid to ignore such basic vandalism of a limited environment. They're aren't many whales left, and it pays for seal-pups to keep their heads low at the time of year when they're most fuzzy and huggable. And then there's drift-net fishing, nuclear power, lead levels in fuel, and plain old smog and trash to worry about. Big, frightening issues, so hard to confront on a personal level. Some of the music on *Rainbow Warriors* will take your mind off the problem for a while. Some of your dollars will lessen the problems.

Simple politics, quick conclusions. Good cause and a good album. *Watchmen* artist Dave Gibbons does the inside sleeve art, too.

CHAD TAYLOR

#### KEITH LeBLANC Major Malfunction (World Records) DUB SYNDICATE Pounding System (On-U)

Those who danced on the ceiling at the recent Tackhead concert will have no trouble recognising these two works, imported in limited quantity to coincide with the one-off date in Auckland. For those of us weary of the heavy metal / R&B overkill visited upon us by promoters with no sense of

adventure or progress, the Powerstation show was a revelation. Not only the chance to see a band at the cutting edge of dancefloor beat, but also a to see a genius in action. That man, Adrian Sherwood, has production credits on both these works.

The Keith LeBlanc album, made in 1986, could be alternatively titled 'Roots of Tackhead', since LeBlanc is an integral part of that unit. Fans will instantly recognise the dentist's drill noises on 'Get This'. The rhythms are mostly minimalist drum and bassline hip-hop dressed up with vocal sampling, a Sherwood speciality. He has an enormous library of cassettes from which he draws quotable quotes to scratch or synthesise into the mix. The album's title track is about the Challenger disaster, drawing its name from an early account of what happened, as relayed by Mission Control. Talk of the space race and warfare dominate the assorted vocal noises, so the whole scenario is politically sound.

But *Major Malfunction*, for all its challenging ideas, is still three years old, and it sounds it. Cabaret Voltaire have ploughed similar fields and, like Tackhead, have moved on. It's bound to sell, but let's hope someone picks up on the new Tackhead LP for release.

The other highlight of the Tackhead show was the reggae dub/DJ onslaught of the sound system and the joy of watching Sherwood at the controls. The *Pounding System* LP, also several years old, should delight everyone who crowded around the mixing desk to see how it was done. As Sherwood explains in the sleeve notes, this is ambient sound, ie: the product of recording within a specific environment. And, as he said in last month's *RIU*, good dub music is very controlled and very simple.

Maybe Sherwood's natural modesty is a little misleading in this context. *Pounding System* is filled with audio trickery, masses of diffuse sounds welling up from the speakers. Guitar, drums, bass, percussion, horns and keyboards swap from dominant to submissive roles in a tour de force of the artistry that is dub music. The album whispers, murmurs and thunders in turn, never losing the essence of the rhythm so crucial to continuity. Sheer delight for the experienced and a fascinating introduction for the novice. This man has plenty to be modest about.

DUNCAN CAMPBELL

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