

bloody great.

Naturally, there's some great guitar contained herein from both Caen and Gamble (the former somewhat under-rated due to the presence of the latter), backed by eloquent tinkling by Stuart Pearce and the super-tight rhythm machine of MacDonald and Jim Lawrie.

Street Talk could see the year out with singles culled from *Battleground* but, if I may be so bold, the next one should be the title track — perfect radio fodder and one of the album's highlights. Last year, Street Talk took the RIANZ's Album Of The Year award and, quite simply, unless the rest of the field manages to cut this album in the next four months, Street Talk are home and hosed to make it two in a row.

John Dix

NEWZ HEARD THE NEWZ MIRAGE

Speaking as a dedicated North Islander, I find these Mainlanders disturbingly stimulating. Christchurch's favourite sons, formerly Bon Marche, have assembled an album that's sure to show their patronising cousins across the pond a thing or two.

The Newz make very contemporary, witty and stylish pop music, incorporating many influences, from a dash of Clash in "Europe" to a good 10cc's of XTC, if you know what I mean, on several tracks.

The album was recorded over a six-week period at Christchurch's Tandem Studios. Eric Johns, ex-Heatwave, has worked production wonders, with only eight tracks to play around with. Just goes to show what a little ingenuity will do, since there's nothing thin about the sound.

Heard The Newz contains a tremendous wealth of original material, credits shared by now-departed Lance Parkyn, along with Bryan Colechin, Simon Darke, Phil Jones and Brad Coates.

Coates contributes much of the XTC influence with his quirky Barry Andrews-style keyboards, supported by the choppy guitars of Jones and Anton Razbetteaux. Darke's versatility as a vocalist enables him to play the aristocrat on "I (Still) Wanna Be An Arab" or a snarling goose-stepper on the superlative "Stuttgart Turnabout".

Literally, The Newz have a knack for cutting everyone down to size with their clever, biting couplets. Take this sample from "Never":

*I've been into boys, I've been into men,
I've been into zap, I've been into zen,
I've been into coke, I've been into fanta,
I've been into pixies, I've been into san-ta...*

Or again, from "Books":

*You come on strong
Like eau de Cologne,
You're all suggestions
On the end of the phone,
A Mills and Boons
On the end of the line....*

No more patronising from the North, because I've got Newz for you, and it's all good. Next project: a live EP featuring "Feel Like Makin' Scones....?"

Duncan Campbell

THE KINKS ONE FOR THE ROAD ARISTA

"Rock bands have come and rock bands have gone but rock'n'roll will go on forever" yells Ray Davies as the band smash into "All Day and All of the Night" and straight off you know that the new re-energised Kinks are for real coz there they are, Dave Davies spitting

Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark



Devo



Newz

fire, the unstoppable Mick Avory laying down a truly dangerous backbeat and Ray, well, he's eighteen again and knocking spots off kids fool enough to try and compete on the same rock'n'roll stage.

It's been fourteen years or so since the historic audience frenzy of *Live at the Kelvin Hall* but with the new double to hand that's all but forgotten and so too is the camp-flawed ponce of the live album that accompanied *Everybody's In Show Biz. One For the Road* is the Kinks in concert and it shows why they've survived close on twenty years of changing fashions as Ray leads the band, steaming, through a flawless track listing that includes the pride of *Muswell Hillbillies*, "20th Century Man", the classic from *Kontroversy* "Where Have All the Good Times Gone" (and Dave has learned from Mick Ronson), the only version of "Stop Your Sobbing" that counts (but credit to the Pretenders for recognizing it) and hand-picked aces from *Low Budget*.

But it's Side Four that's the pay-off coz there's "Till the End of the Day", sorta ska treated, "Celluloid Heroes" which is real heartfelt nostalgia then into a Dave Davies teasing intro and wham "You Really Got Me", the kiss itself, followed by "Victoria" and the tears are rolling down your cheeks but you're still dancing coz here comes "David Watts" and you forget about the Jam coz compared to the Kinks they're only upstarts.

And you remember to thank Ray Davies for not selling out to high society (Stones) or for indulging in endless self-analysis (Townshend) and then you reach for *One For the Road* to put it on again.

Ta Ray.
George Kay

ERIC CLAPTON JUST ONE NIGHT RSO

Whether this double live album represents the fruits of "just one night" is immaterial. For Eric Clapton it is a return to a form seldom seen since the formidable heights of the *Layla* album.

The last couple of years have seen Clapton slowing to a standstill. The promise of the low-keyed but intensely rhythmic *461 Ocean Boulevard* had faded to the bland silliness of "Wonderful Tonight", surely one of the dopiest songs ever. To be fair, the rush of approval from Clapton's Japanese audience (the album was recorded last December at Tokyo's Budokan Theatre) proves that while I can't love "Wonderful Tonight" somebody out there does. Of course, they may not understand the words. That snide comment aside, let me hasten to say how much I do love *Just One*



Night.

As has been remarked elsewhere, there is a chameleon-like quality about Clapton. The musical company he keeps is reflected, with varying results, in his recorded work. Driven by another guitar master, as in Duane Allman on *Layla*, Clapton rises to extraordinary heights. Increasingly, he has taken the course of least effort. After the sleepwalk of *Slowhand* and *Backless*, *Just One Night* more than restores Clapton's reputation.

He has dropped his American band, signing on a line-up of Britishers, including Chris Stainton, whose keyboards helped Joe Cocker to his early success, and "living legend" guitarist Albert Lee, who also contributes tasty electric piano and vocals which are effective enough to make one not miss the support of Yvonne Elliman and, latterly, Marcy Levy.

The playing on the album is very hot, Lee being one of the few guitarists to provide a spur for Clapton. *Slowhand* himself is in top form, especially on the blues, which has always been his forte. For some time-stopping guitar check out "Worried Life Blues", "Double Trouble", "Rambling On My Mind/Have You Ever Loved a Woman" or "Further On Up The Road", over-recorded but never better.

The non-blues stuff is just fine, too, especially the chugging rhythmic interplay of "After Midnight".

Just One Night far surpasses previous examples of Eric Clapton in concert. For that matter, it beats hollow most of his studio work as well. Despite the sappiness of "Wonderful Tonight", this is the one some of us have hoped he would make since *Layla*, and certainly since *Ocean Boulevard*, his other high point as a leader.

Ken Williams

CHEAP TRICK FOUND ALL THE PARTS CBS

A four-tracker tying up a few loose ends — live cuts of "Day Tripper" (America) and "Can't Hold On" (Japan 1978) and two old studio cuts from the out-take can — "Such A Good Girl" (1976) and "Take Me I'm Yours" (1977). "Day Tripper" is exuberant with a flash of Yardbirds at the outset of the break, while "Can't Hold On" nibbles at the heavier blues-rock side of Nielsen which, for me anyway, bogged down the middle of their essentially no-surprises New Zealand concerts. "Such A Good Girl" could just as easily be a new song as something left over from 1976, but the peak is "Take Me I'm Yours", an elegant slow strolling rocker which would make a whole lot more sense for Bryan Ferry to plunder than "Eight Miles High" (to name only one).

And talking of only one(s), CBS should really re-invest the profits from this record in Christmas boxes for all those who had to put up with the appalling sibilance-sodden pressings of the latest Only Ones album. Every time Perrett hits an S it sounds like someone forging initials in glass with a carpet cutter.

Roy Colbert

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK DINDISC

The new generation of English synthesiser-based ensembles can be pinpointed as beginning with Leeds' Human League "Being Boiled"/"Circus of Death" single on Fast. They dallied before finally following it up with their *Dignity of Labour* EP and a patchy album, *Reproduction*. But too late as Gary Numan stepped in with a ready image and a turgid repertoire of Bowie/Foxx impersonations and cleaned up.

Now we have Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, a Liverpool duo, who have raised the standards of the genre to the level, at least, of early Human League endeavours. Andy McCluskey (the well dressed gent that sings) and Paul Humphreys have already scored with "Electricity" and "Messages", two delightful singles on the album which show their gift for writing natural little gems. Of course they have a bleaker side best represented by the strong melodies of "Almost" and "The Messerschmitt Twins", but it's "Julia's Song" and "Pretending To See the Future", two masterpieces of mounting tension that clinch the album's undeniable quality.

Orchestral Manoeuvres are conclusive proof that a synthesiser band don't have to sound as if they're caged victims of the hackneyed themes of alienation and de-personalisation. The music can be warm, witty and optimistic, it doesn't have to be the cold stare of Numan or Foxx. Orchestral Manoeuvres offer you the best of both worlds.

George Kay

DEVO FREEDOM OF CHOICE WARNER BROS

It must interest some people at least that Devo, who surfaced protesting and studiously different in Akron, now live in Los Angeles and are managed by the same people who managed the same people Devo reckoned were strangling rock to death back in 1976. Or is that merely ultimate Devo? The Devo concept/persona interests me about as much as a Jon Anderson lyric — I only listen to da songs and da words. And sticking with just that, I'd have to conclude this third Devo album is real good.

They're closer now to the mainstream than ever, which is what you might expect when your creative environment changes from rubber to dollars, and in "It's Not Right", "Freedom Of Choice" and "Mr B's Ballroom", Devo have three dead-centre mass-appeal rock gems that ideally should dominate the airwaves for the rest of 1980. "It's Not Right" has a lovely careering but controlled melody above the neo-drum-machine bottom that runs remorselessly through both sides, "Ballroom" peaks on an outrageous pop chorus, and the title song is arguably their strongest thrust at the wallets of middle rock America yet. Singer Mark Mothersbaugh, hitherto the master of the staccato mono-syllable, almost bends notes — almost phrases even — above a snarling guitar riff and a beat that would make some people hide in caves. To paraphrase Kurtz, the drum sound, the drum sound.

Jerry Casale, who seems to be about as fulfilling an interviewee as Lou Reed and Robert Muldoon, said around this time last year that by album three Devo could even be singing about women. Devo are still undeniably, well, Devo, but they are no longer, as Neil Young said while signing them up for his movie, the absolute opposite of everything he is trying to achieve in music. By album five, the move from being a quirky alternative to just another (top) American rock'n'roll band could well be complete.

Roy Colbert

JOAN ARMATRADING

Now All She Needs Is You

Joan Armatrading's new album ... **Me Myself I**, is the perfect antidote to 1980. Maybe it's you who needs Joan Armatrading ... Includes the single ... **Me Myself I**.

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