



Jello Biafra
Dead Kennedys
Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables
Cherry Red

In a capping magazine of a few years back there appeared a picture of an African child swollen with malnutrition. Below the picture were the words 'Chocolate thins'.

Vocalist Jello Biafra and three other San Franciscans, East Bay Ray (guitar), Klaus Flouride (bass) and Ted (drums) often employ similar bad taste shock tactics in provoking attention for their particular grievances. Moaning about the treadmill subversives' style is safe and dull so the Kennedys have set out to upset both liberal and conservative complacency with evil send-ups and garrish gibes.

Biafra warbles and East Bay Ray lacerates the nerve ends over the fourteen tracks of punk fury. 'Kill the Poor' is population control by neutron bomb. 'California Uber Alles' is a kick at fascism American style and 'I Kill Children' is psycho killer satire, not so funny. But the payoff is definitely a different and longer take of their 'Holiday in Cambodia' single, a what-the-hell-are-you-moanin'-about-kid pack of carefully stacked TNT. 'Viva Las Vegas', their version, closes the album as a perfect satire of the bullshit American ethos of pleasure and free enterprise.

The Kennedys may upset a few phoney middle class sensitivities but that's what they're after. Sit up and taste what you must fear.

George Kay

Aretha Franklin
Aretha
Arista

The tracks here can be divided into the good, the bad and the, uh, revealing.

The last first. Anyone who cares is sadly aware that for much of the past decade Lady Soul has been issuing material nearer to

nightclub than her gospel background. Often it was only in the occasional self-penned number that she retained touch with her roots and source of greatest performances. What is revealing about *Aretha's* sole original is that while it boasts a terrific vocal, the whole arrangement and production is solidly showtime Las Vegas.

The bad from good tracks are easily distinguished, the former being the four produced, and often written, by Chuck Jackson. These are just more dreary, string-sodden stodge.

The good tracks are the four produced by Arif Mardin. Sure, they're slick too, but they've also got life and a couple have real class. For example there's a powerhouse rendition of Otis Redding's 'Can't Turn You Loose'. The stand-out, however is the stunning 'What A Fool Believes'. Franklin's voice glides over a super punchy arrangement which transforms the Doobies' weedy version into a gem of sophisticated soul. Highly polished maybe, but a gem nonetheless.

Peter Thomson

George Thorogood
More George Thorogood and the Destroyers
RCA

The first album by the rough-house, high-energy guitarist hit home with a wallop and made Thorogood an overnight sensation. His brand of careering, bar blues — hoarse vocals, shrieking slide guitar and all — had the same up-and-at-'em attitude of the first new wave. It was also a lot of fun.

His next album, *Move It On Over*, was also very strong, but perhaps too similar to the first, although some who heard it first prefer it.

Then came a lengthy hiatus while Thorogood fought and lost a court case over the release of old tapes. That early stuff wasn't bad at all, but wait till you hear his new album. It's a killer.

George is jumping again — playing ridiculously fast and loose and digging up some grand stuff from the blues/rockabilly stockpile, including a knockout Muddy Waters song, 'Bottom of the Sea', and a Carl Perkins' number, 'Restless'.

There are also songs by Willie Dixon, John Lee Hooker, Slim Harpo, Elmore James and an instrumental, 'Kid from Philly', attributed to one Jorge Thoroscum.

For some reason Thorogood also remakes the old Strangeloves' 'Night Time', which appeared in a more precise and generally more interesting version on the "old tapes" album, *Better Than the Rest*.

The change in the Thorogood sound is in the addition to the trio of Hank Carter who plays a honking saxophone that beefs up the sound in just the right places. Of course, that doesn't stop George from playing like crazy most of the time. He may not be the world's greatest musician, but it's his sort of inspired, all-stops-out lunacy that will keep the blues well, alive and lively.

Ken Williams

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