

RECORDS

Weather Report Night Passage CBS

Let's get straight to the point here, no prose impressionism, no esoteric analyses, no historical overviews: *Night Passage* is an excellent Weather Report album. It's also their best since the mighty *Heavy Weather*.

Not that the two albums are markedly similar mind you. Whereas *Heavy Weather* was notable for its sheer catchy poppiness, much of the new work is characterized by swinging jazz-bop. (There's even a reworked Ellington rave-up, from memory the first non-original they've recorded in 10 albums). But any generalizations sit uneasily on such vibrant music. Claims could also be made for soul roots. Feel your back-bone slip to the sly funk of 'Madagascar'.

The prodigious Zawinul is, as always, the dominant force, both as composer — although by now it's almost impossible to tell where the writing ends and improvisation begins — and as monster of the keyboards. Not that Pastorius ever allows himself to be outplayed and it's wonderful to hear Shorter performing superbly once more, blowing away any memories of his previous reticence.

In some 'elevated' circles Weather Report are put down as musical muggies, pinching the harmonies of past generations' serious musicians. Either that or as jazz conservatives, clinging to traditional and rock-based tempi in order to attract wide audiences. Bollocks! Weather Report are giving us some of the most exultant and dynamic small-group music on record. *Night Passage*, as I said before, is an excellent example.

Peter Thomson

Warren Zevon Stand In The Fire Asylum

There are many reasons for an artist to record live. The best is that he can bring a new dimension to his work. A great live album, like Otis Redding's *Live In Europe*, puts a charge through songs never felt in the studio.

A live album can act as a good retrospective, such as Bob Seger's double set, or it can give a performer a chance to clear out old emotional or artistic baggage, as Bob Dylan has done several times. Some reasons can be less worthy.

Warren Zevon's live album, recorded at the Roxy in Los Angeles, is almost impossible to figure. It's a tough rock album, which could have been understandable if Zevon had needed to prove he wasn't one of the Californian school of laidback singer-songwriter singing, as Glenn Frey of The Eagles puts it, "ooohs for bucks."

But Zevon's songs have always been too tough, too knowing, to be dismissed as LA vanilla. His weak point is not artistic softness but his singing. In the studio his limited vocal abilities get by and there's a thrill of a kind in

hearing how close he gets to the edge.

On *Stand In The Fire*, with the band cranked up loud and steaming, he has to resort too often to a hoarse bellow to make his vocal points. Sometimes it works. 'Lawyers Guns And Money', a cry of terror anyway, benefits from Zevon sounding like a man slowly being throttled, and played very loud there's a sort of frantic appeal, a little after the style of Dylan's *Hard Rain* set from the Rolling Thunder tour.

The losses are, however, not minor. Zevon can be extremely funny, but on 'Poor Poor Pitiful Me' or 'Excitable Boy' the humour is almost drowned in the sound and fury.

On the one hand you can admire Zevon for proving once again that his heart is firmly committed to rock and roll. On the other you have to face the hard fact that not everyone who loves rock and roll can make it live.

Phil Gifford

BRIEFS

Various Artists, *Dindisc 1980 (Dindisc)*

An appetiser from Dindisc, letting you into their small stable at a friendly price. Side One has two from the Revillos' pop-sodden *Rev Up* album, confirming the Honeycombs need never reform, and three from Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark — the hard-to-get 'Waiting For The Man' (about time Bowie's old version of this came out in some form or other) the 10in version of the fine 'Messages' and a re-done snappier 'Electricity'. Side Two begins with the undistinctive Dedringer, and then come two from Monochrome Set's *Love Zombies* (the single 'Apocalypse' is fun) and a track from each Martha & The Muffins album. A deliberately accessible selection from each artist.

Simple Minds, *Empire and Dance (Zoom)*

Two years and three albums on, Scotland's Simple Minds have come up with an atmospheric and substantial album that surpasses most in this often lacklustre genre. It mixes exuberant dance music with rather more sombre material — a little reminiscent of Joy Division in their more austere moments. Their sometimes pretentious lyrics are well camouflaged by the album's rich texture. SG

The Tremblers, *Twice Nightly (Epic)*

In which Peter Noone, who was once the Hermits' Herman, goes all American with an album for Bruce Johnston's label that's a lot closer to contemporary Californian rock (20/20 etc) than to the partially-mourned Hermits. The pop sensibility is still there, but Herman's very English Englishness has all but disappeared, and the most common replacement is irritating Doug Fieger-like exaggerations. The songs, courting the ear with urgency only, are very average — Costello's superb, 'Green Shirt' expected. RC

Chipmunk Punk (K-TEL)

While this album should have remained a nasty rumour, the product does live up to expectations. Alvin, Simon and Theodore are competent musicians, cranking out fair facsimiles of the original hits, though the term 'punk' can hardly be applied to any of them. All three are superb vocalists, and give it everything they've got.

Other tracks included here are 'Good Girls Don't', 'Frustrated', 'Let's Go', 'How Do I Make You', 'Call Me', 'You May Be Right' and 'Crazy Little Thing Called Love'. In some cases, they improve on the originals. Good value at a party, once everyone is sufficiently legless. DC

Randy Meisner, *One More Song (Epic)*

One classic song, the title track, which reworks a theme as old as sin with bitter sweet resignation. Reunited with Eagles' Glenn Frey and Don Henley, Meisner hits beautiful heights on the song that may still be four years too late for top 40 recognition. The rest of the album unfortunately slides away down the Californian fault line. PG

Boz Scaggs, *Hits! (CBS)*

This album was so clearly aimed at the Christmas stocking market — the best-selling tracks from Scaggs' last few albums plus a couple of nondescript "newies" wrapped up with an unambiguous, but misleading (how can unheard material be "hit"?) title.

You cannot argue with the choice of material — these were the biggies, baby — but a considerably more interesting record might have been compiled if some attention had been paid to Scaggs' earlier, non-hit albums. That's showbiz, baby. KW

Willie Nelson, *Always (CBS)*

Nelson must be one of the most compiled artists ever — and he's not even dead. *Always* is another spin through the back catalogue,

this time seven of the 12 plucked from the Leon Russell-Nelson album that followed *Stardust*, with the other five in the *Stardust* mood, but recorded before that middle of the road breakthrough. Nice music — but wouldn't Nelson fans already have most of it? PG

The London Hitmen, *Aim For The Feet (Epic)*

English, five, with miscellaneous help-out credits covering everyone from Nick Lowe and Costello to the Regulars and the Golinski Brothers. Sharp little songs, firmly entrenched in the Costello-led return-to-sharp-little-songs movement, the hooks delivered by tack hammer rather than mallet. The singles 'O.K.' and 'She's All Mine' are both here, but 'Kid Stuff' could be the best radio shot of them all. RC

Bruce Cockburn, *Humans (RCA)*

A Canadian who writes Jesus songs sounds like my idea of hell. But Cockburn has several things going for him that might do Dylan some good as he churns out his lack lustre gospel. For a start Cockburn is subtle, for another he likes reggae — and gets Leroy Sibbles of the Heptones singing some background vocals. But most important of all, he writes good songs rather than tracts set to music. 'Rumours of Glory' and 'What About The Bond' are as impressive as his surprise success of 1980, 'Wondering Where The Lions Are'. PG

The Unobtainable T. Rex, *T. Rex (EMI)*

I suppose it's quite safe not to admit to owning those T. Rex singles since the late Marc Bolan has been bestowed with an artistic credibility that was mostly denied him when he was alive. In many ways a hit forty-five in the early seventies was sudden death. Bolan was always aware of the Art of Crafting Singles even to the extent of making his B sides worthwhile and interesting songs and not merely fillers. This album is a collection of many of those B sides 1972-1977. Many of them still sound good but you can't beat the forty-fives themselves. GK

45s

Adam and the Ants, *'Antmusic' (CBS)*

A second excellent single culled from the *Kings of the Wild Frontier* album. Lovely picture sleeve, and 'Fall In' on the B-side isn't on the LP. Worth \$2.50 of anybody's money.

Pink Flamingos, *'Pink Flamingo' (Polydor)*

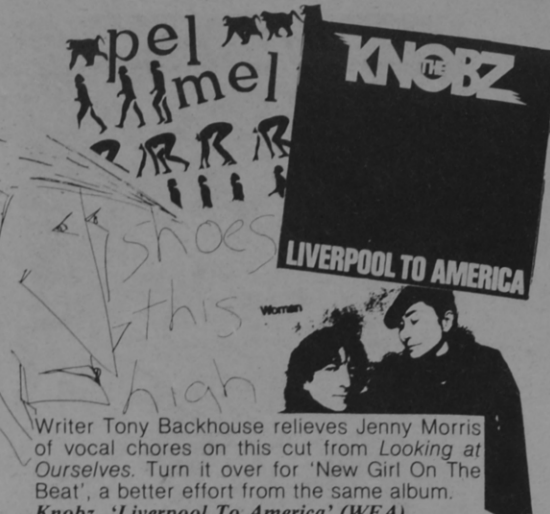
One of the best tracks from the debut album. Catchy, medium-paced rocker that deserves airplay. Flip is 'Beat Goes On', an overused title if ever I've heard one.

Shoes This High, *EP (STH Music)*

Full credit to the elevated ones for getting this effort into the shops. 'The Nose One' is good — Shoes at their best — a great, jangly off-beat piece. 'Foot Dream' has Brent doing his best John Lydon. The other half is 'A Mess', which lives up to its name. 'Not Weighting' is too monotonous by far, despite being a reasonably good idea.

Crocodiles, *'Teenarama' (Foolish)*

Strange that the audience this is aimed at wouldn't even remember the Teenarama.



Writer Tony Backhouse relieves Jenny Morris of vocal chores on this cut from *Looking at Ourselves*. Turn it over for 'New Girl On The Beat', a better effort from the same album.

Knobz, *'Liverpool To America' (WEA)*

Taking out the Bad Taste Award for this month, the Knobz pen a song about you-know-who. Malcolm McLaren talked about Cash from Chaos. This is Money from Misery.

UB40, *'Earth Dies Screaming' (Graduate)*

Not quite up to 'Food For Thought' standard, this does surpass 'I Think It's Going to Rain'. It's laid-back white reggae with a couple of nice sax breaks, not what the title would suggest. The flip is 'Dream A Lie'.

John Lennon, *'Woman' (Geffen)*

Pleasant love song from the late legend's final LP. The real interest is the B-side. According to the sleeve, it's 'Beautiful Boys' by Yoko Ono, but it is, in fact, 'Beautiful Boy' by John Lennon, both of which are on *Double Fantasy*. A cock up.

Wrecked Jets, *'Can I Go Home?'/ 'The Howling Life' (Au Go Go)*

First and last single from a Melbourne band who broke up over a year ago. Well presented in a fold-out sleeve, 'Can I Go Home?' is very straightforward pub rock. 'The Howling Life' shows promise, but these tracks don't justify a posthumous release when so many working combos are struggling to record.

Pelmer, *'No Word From China' (Primate)*

More Aussies, but this time far more interesting. Pelmer are part of an emerging Australian-underground scene, far removed from the staple diet of Angels and Cold Chisel. An invigorating release, with enough going on to fill but not clutter the sound.

Polystyrene, *'Talk In Toytown' (Liberty)*

First single in the solo career of the X-Ray Spex leading lady. Nice keyboards help salvage a very ordinary, tinseley song. The other face is 'B-Tropical', a good one for the ZB playlist.

Visage, *'Fade To Grey' (Polydor)*

Visage is the brainchild of Steve Strange. The band features various members of Ultravox and Magazine, and are at present just a studio outfit. High class electronics, that will be greatly enhanced by the film clips to come. The other side is 'The Steps'. Very Melodramatic.

Mark Phillips

INDIES MAIL ORDER

- Propeller**
REV 1 Features, City Scenes, \$2.50
REV 2 Spelling Mistakes, Feel So Good, \$2.50
REV 4 Marching Girls, True Love/First In Line, \$2.50
K111/ REV 5 Techtones, That Girl, \$2.50
REV 6 Features, Perfect Features Exposed 12", \$3.99

Class Of '81

Available now, Propeller's \$7.99 compilation album featuring 12 acts including Screaming Meemees, Newmatics, Blam Blam Blam, Newtons, Killjoys, Ainsworths etc. Class Of '81 \$7.99 plus 50 cents postage

Ripper

- RIP 1 Terrorways/Proud Scum \$2.50
RIP 4 Whizz Kids/Spelling Mistakes \$2.50

And More

GORDONS 1 The Gordons, Future Shock, \$2.50

WL 001 Steroids, Mr Average, \$2.50
Post and Packing is 50 cents for first single, 25 cents for additional singles. Post to Propeller Records, PO Box 37-371, Parnell, Auckland 1. Circle the numbers you require and complete form:

Name

Address

Phone

NEWMATICS ~ JUDAS

RIPPER RECORDS

MUCHMORE ASSOCIATES

43A VICTORIA ST, AUCKLAND NZ.
PHONE 796-272 796-414 PO BOX 6537

Exclusively Representing:

THE FURYS **TECHTONES**
On Muchmore Thru CBS On Propeller Thru Festival

VALENTINOS **NEW ENTRANTS**

By arrangement with **SEBASTIAN CHASE SYDNEY**
RESULT RECORDING ARTISTS

THE JUKES **THE MOTIVATORS** **THE REELS**

Coming:
KEVIN BORICH, March-April

Charle Hayden, Don Cherry, Dewey Redman, Ed Blackwell
'OLD & NEW DREAMS'
March 24 Christchurch, March 25 Auckland

Booking:
THE RUMBA BAR, VICTORIA HOTEL, AUCKLAND

STUDIO 132

PROFESSIONAL REHEARSAL STUDIO

RATES INCLUDE:

STEREO P.A.	MICS
TAPE DECK/TURNTABLE	
BAND LOUNGE: TV & REFRESHMENTS	

EXTRAS FOR HIRE AT LOW RATES

GRAND PIANO	BACKLINE
DRUMS	4-TRACK TAPE
KEYBOARDS	

24 HOUR SERVICE **INSPECTION WELCOME**
ALL ENQUIRIES TO ANNETTE & BARRY
Phone 798-057 **After Hours**
132 St Georges Bay Rd Parnell. **Ph 27 62-403**