

RECORDS

Various Artists
Rockers
Island
Black Slate
Sirens In The City
Ensign
Congos
Heart Of The Congos
Go Feet
Peter Tosh
Wanted/Dread And Alive
Rolling Stones Records

Rockers is the soundtrack to what looks like one helluva movie, a sort-of updated version of *The Harder They Come*, starring Leroy 'Horsemouth' Wallace, one of JA's top session drummers. Horsey is one bad man, on or off-screen, and on this album you'll find Burning Spear, Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Jacob Miller, and the Heptones, to name but a few. Great value, and when is the movie to be shown here?

Black Slate have crossed over after many years playing the black clubs around Britain, and have gained a couple of international hits along the way. It's hard to begrudge them that success. Rockers gotta eat too. Anyway, their new album, *Sirens In The City* has its moments. It's a light-weight, but beautifully played and produced, and should be put on layby for summer.

Best news is the release of the Congos' *Heart Of The Congos*, on the Beat's Go Feet label. Cedric Myton and Roy Johnson have sadly split since this was recorded, four years ago, so grab it as a collector's item. Scratch Perry produces, and Sly Dunbar and Winston Wright are in there somewhere too. Need I say more?

Peter Tosh seems to be trying to salvage some of his reputation lost after those last two appalling albums. But *Wanted Dread And Alive* (Rolling Stones Records) doesn't quite do it. He's still got a long way to go to recapture the guts of *Legalise It* or *Equal Rights*.
Duncan Campbell

Landscape
From the Tea-rooms of Mars to the Hell Holes of Uranus
RCA

Time to sit up and take note of what our brothers are doing

in UK, in particular Richard Burgess, who old timers might remember as the drummer in Quincy Conserve.

Burgess has been making a name for himself over there, producing Spandau Ballet, programming effects on Kate Bush's 'Never Forever', and doing music for dance groups Shock, and Hot Gossip. But mostly, Burgess is drummer for 8-year-old band Landscape, which is now associated with the Blitz kids' scene, where you dress up and go down in style.

Landscape consist of Burgess on drums, Christopher Heaton on electric piano, Andrew Pask on bass, Peter Thoms on trombone, and John Walters on soprano sax and flute.

Side One is stacked with pacy rhythms, and instrumentals aptly named for the atmosphere they invoke. Side Two tells a few stories. The hit 'Einstein A Go-Go' finds someone using the phone to call (ex) President Carter. 'Norman Bates' fits in with Landscape's Alfred Hitchcock obsession. Later on, there's a trombone piece complete with soft applause.

A wry touch to an album full of surprises.

AnnLouise Martin

Stiff Little Fingers

Go For It

Chrysalis

Shorn of their dubious and partly discredited role as spokesmen for wot-it's-like-in-Belfast, Stiff Little Fingers are seated comfortably in a lyrical mainstream on their new album. Their most potent lyric in fact concerns playing records loud in the bedroom while Mum shouts unavailingly up the stairs. Not a single rubber bullet is fired. "But the music is still the same" explains Jake Burns, "it's fast and loud, because that's the sort of music we like".

Fast and loud much of *Go For It* may well be, but there is also some rather desperate dabbling as SLF try to cover as many bets as possible. Reggae rhythms kick along two tracks, brass is tried on another, and there's even an atypical slice of Ricky Nelson rock 'n' roll in the middle of Side Two. 'Just Fade Away', 'Hits And Misses' and 'Safe As Houses' emerge as the most complete and likeable songs, and the title track sounds like one of the year's better song intros until you realise that's all you're getting.
Roy Colbert

Yardbirds

Five Live Yardbirds.

... featuring Eric Clapton.
... featuring Jeff Beck.

Charly

Five Live Yardbirds (1964) has been called the British R&B album — and justly so. Recorded at London's Marquee Club, it generates tremendous excite-



Landscape

ment. The momentum is head-long and the music (covers of Howling Wolf, Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, Slim Harpo) is of a high order. While a rather pallid singer, Keith Relf was a superb harp player. A youthful Eric Clapton contributes some raging guitar.

While never a "hit" album, *Five Live* had an enormous influence on aspiring musicians. Five tracks from *Five Live* crop up on the *Clapton* album, along with studio cuts recorded before Slowhand jacked in the Yardbirds in search of "de blooze" with the heavier John Mayall's Bluesbreakers.

He was replaced by the more experimental Jeff Beck, and the *Beck* album features two of Beck's most innovative solos — 'Shapes of Things' and 'Mister, You're a Better Man Than I'. In 'I Ain't Done Wrong' (a reworking of an Elmore James' song) and 'New York City Blues' (a remake of 'Five Long Years' from *Five Live*) Beck shows his ability to turn the blues into mania, as he would later with Rod Stewart.

These albums are from tapes held by Giorgio Gomelsky, the Yardbirds' former manager. They represent a major musical document — the first British R&B wave and the move into psychedelia and Eastern sounds. Top stuff.

After the praise, a few reservations: Firstly, *Five Live* isn't the original album. There has been some unexplained — and inexplicable — tampering.

The reissue has been edited, eliminating audience noise and patter between tracks — and losing much impetus. Also 'Good Morning Little School-girl' is not from the Marquee session. The rough-and-ready version of *Five Live* has been replaced by the studio cut that was the Yardies' second single.

The changes may have been well-intentioned but they are no improvement.

The Clapton and Beck albums have been available before, but these have the worthy addition of good Chris Welch liner notes.
Ken Williams

Kraftwerk
Computer World
EMI

Kraftwerk were the first commercially successful band within the rock idiom to realise and record the fact that electronics and synthesisers could be used to paint pictures of contemporary landscapes, be they abstract or concrete.

It's been nigh on three years since their last album, *The Man Machine* and in many ways their new outing, *Computer World*, is a continuation of the observations of the latter. Musically, simplicity and consequently melodic accessibility are still the main characteristics of their arrangements. Haunting and melancholic synthesiser lines are used to touching effect on 'Computer Love', a song about computer dating. On the other hand, 'Pocket Calculator' is a flippant and firmly tongue-in-cheek dig at our regard for those machines, and the playful 'Home Computer' follows the same pattern.

Kraftwerk haven't covered any new ground on this album but that doesn't matter. Suffice to say that they use their machines to notch up a gem of an album.
George Kay

The Ramones
Pleasant Dreams
Sire

In New Zealand last year, both Joey and Johnny Ramone were emphatic the band had stayed on top of producer Phil Spector for *End Of The Century*. But Spector still managed to leave his mark on the record. The same thing seems to have happened on the latest album with 10cc's Graham Gouldman. The Ramones take all the arranging credits, but the sort of influence we would expect Gouldman to exert is in fact here — more concentration on vocals, occasional use of keyboards, and generally much more slipped into the background than usual.

Song-wise it's never been easy to separate the great Ramones songs from the good ones, but this time the picture is a lot clearer. The opener 'We Want The Airwaves' is effective pinhead-anthem like 'Rock 'n' Roll Radio' was last time. 'K.K.K.' has a great chorus, plus the usual Joey melodic moves in the verse, and '7-11' is an updated (he mentions record swap meets and space invaders) 'Teen Angel' — da goil id deaded at the end. Love it. But the rest, brief attempts at moving out of the norm ('It's Not My Place') notwithstanding, is pretty average.

Pleasant Dreams is one stage further removed from *End Of The Century*. It's their marketably least obnoxious album. It's their worst album.
Roy Colbert

Motorhead
No Sleep 'Till Hammersmith
Bronze

Motorhead, Britain's heavy metal kings, deliver an awesome blitz of sound on this live recording from their 1981 UK tour. Lemmy's vodka-soaked larynx strains to rasp over a cacophony put up by a trio bent on living for the moment. Forget the future — the message is hedonism. Now.

The album opens with the title track of their last recording, *Ace of Spades*, which sets the pace for the rest of the set. Frenetic guitar solos and a lurching, drunken rhythm section fight with the vocals for a say in a wall of activity.

You know I'm going to loose,
And gambling is for fools,
But that's the way I like it baby,

I don't want to live forever.

Lemmy's remark that rock and roll is an exhausting business is pure understatement. On only two numbers, 'Capri-



Blam Blam Blam
There Is No Depression In
New Zealand (Propeller)

The Blams have up to now suffered from a slight studio chill on their recorded work, the result perhaps of too much engineering and too little production. The two songs here go a long way to crossing that divide. 'No Depression' mirrors the bluster of its lyrics with an unsettling sing-along treatment, while 'Gotta Be Guilty', by stripping down to a single prominent voice, gives them a new clarity of focus.

Excuse me while I remove my head from the Tannoy. The buzzing is bliss.
Dave Perkins

BRIEFS

Robert Gordon
Are You Gonna Be The One
(RCA)

Technically, Gordon has one of the better voices in rock and roll. The criticism that has lingered throughout his career is that he relies too much on technique and not enough on heart. His new album is best when he leans to country, a little uninspired when he rocks. But for those with a new taste for rockabilly inspired by the Stray Cats, Gordon is certainly worth investigating. PG

The Barracudas
Drop Out With
The Barracudas (EMI)

The back cover should have been the front cover, featuring as it does a suitably archetypal Seeds/Bryds/Love group photo, plus the lyric to the key song 'I Wish It Could Be '65 Again'. The Barracudas lack the Byrds' vocals when they're doing Byrds, lack the Beach Boys' inventiveness (and vocals) when they're doing surf, etc, etc, but this is still an enjoyable cruise through Los Angeles circa 1965. File beside Flamin' Groovies. RC

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Joy Division
Atmosphere/She's Lost Control
(Factory)

'Atmosphere' the song, atmosphere the production. The vocals hover shakily around the melody, never quite getting there, the drums majestic-magnificent, the bass riff nibbling away tenaciously until, suddenly, it's the record's chief hook, and keyboards filling the sound out to a Spectorian expanse. Don't walk away, in silence, don't walk away. Superb.

'She's Lost Control'. Far less lordly, percussion right up front and a melody that really isn't one. Sorta like cluttered badly-mixed Kraftwerk. But it still holds you.
Roy Colbert



Broken Dolls
Serenade (Epic)

A surprisingly stolid record from the Broken Dolls. 'Serenade' is built on goose-step drumming and even the long-delayed sax entry at the end doesn't really lift it a lot. Maybe the band's line-up changes will give them more sparkle.

Alms For Children
Danny Boy (Rem)

AFC seem set for the post-punk audience — an aggressive, yet clean sound and plenty of echoes of Gang of Four. Suitable lyrical savagery, too, but perhaps a touch hollow?

Midge Marsden Connection
Slow Walk Jive Talk (Mandrill)

Forget Deane Waretni, this guy really is the king of the North Island pubs. 'Jive Talk' is much as you might expect from somebody who's been playing country blues since the sixties, but more bare-knuckled than city slickers like to imagine this kind of music to be.
Francis Stark

Tall Dwarfs
Nothing's Going to Happen
(Furtive)

Two guitars and a bedroom is normally a fatal combination, as many a would-be can tell you, but it seems that Knox and Bathgate can't shake off the habit of making excellent singles. This is every bit as good as those first two Toy Love efforts, and as different as you could get while still retaining Knox's voice. Great tunes, inspired two-man arrangements and New Zealand's best rock and roll singer. Let's hope he doesn't settle down to a life of record reviewing.
Dave Dobbyn

Bull by the Horns (Epic)

Another distinctive voice with an ear for a weird arrangement. I don't like 'Bull By The Horns' nearly as much as 'Lipstick Power' yet, but I'm working on it. Both sides move at a crawl that keeps you checking your turntable, and I have no more clear idea what they are about than 'Lipstick Power', but I'm working on it. And that's a recommendation.



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