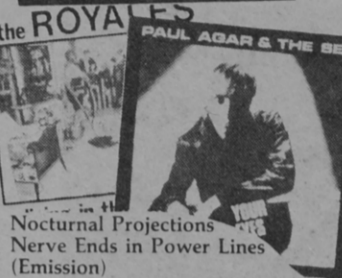




VICTORIA  
4 5 S



the ROYALES  
Nerve Ends in Power Lines (Emission)

Modern energy in abundance but lacks vocal clarity. Shows promise of things to come. B-side 'In Purgatory' has its own tension but both songs are as similar in arrangement as they are in outlook.

Herbs, French Letter (Warrior)  
A soothing Scuth seas calypso beat as in sipping rum and coke under a palm tree until anti-nuclear lyrics hit you - like a falling coconut - this is a protest song. Side Two is a longer dub version. Great production.

The Royales  
Living in the Suburbs (Key)  
A strong rhythm track, spacey keyboards and painful twangy guitar. Mi-Sex meets Members. Rob Aicken has achieved a full sound here, but the words are simply banal.

I Am Joe's Music  
The Way You Get Your Way (Mushroom)

I Am Joe's Music is ex Crocodile Fane Flaws. Two years old, but

still a natty pop tune, humour intact. Flip 'Sex War' is not such easy listening.

Henchmen  
I Got a Right (Cadaver)  
Aggressive this, a la Iggy Pop *Search and Destroy*, but not quite, although there's a bit of growling to finish up. B-side is a 'hit you with my wall of noise' number, but then it's not trying to be anything else.

Accessories, The Accessory  
Recorded on 12H Hamilton four track, this is the band's ska theme song. Phil Hirst's light-hearted piano is a relief. More could be made of this piece. 'Friday Night' is mediocre, the lyrics don't help.

Dance Exponents  
Victoria (Mushroom)  
'Victoria' is irritatingly catchy. Starts slowly with plenty of space and builds in classic manner. Very melodic. Flip, 'Can't Kiss the Lips of a Memory' provides a good antidote.

Paul Agar  
(Look Into) Your Eyes (Reaction)  
We've heard a lot about this boy, but the tune isn't all it's cracked up to be. Traditional pop formula, sixties sweet vocals and ultimately forgettable. 'Beat the Night' has more substance.

B. Caitcheon  
Can You Rock 'n' Roll Rex?  
New Mockers' guitarist's solo effort. Title track is simply gazoo and guitar. 'Boring Barney' is gazoo with two guitars. Best is 'The Mercy of the Chain' on the other side, a quiet, sombre,

meandering instrumental.

Mantra  
Night Street Lady (Warrior)  
Based on a HM riff but the guitar solo is saved for the end. On 'Passing Friend' (B-side) it's in the middle. Both tracks lack spark, little is accomplished. AnnLouise Martin



Funkapolitan  
In the Crime of Life (London)  
Recorded under the wing of August (Kid Creole) Darnell. A-side is New York neu-disco, bland enough for white radio stations. Of more interest is 'War' on t'other side. Harsher rap funk with more than a hint of New Yorkers, Material.

Echo & the Bunnymen  
The Back of Love (WEA)  
This may be a taste of the album to come. A more aloof production though the sound is as full as ever and strange noises hit you from behind. But both songs lack the bite of much of *Heaven Up There*, leaving me worried about their third album.

Depeche Mode  
see You, 7" & 12" (Mute)  
When Vince Clarke left Depeche Mode to form Yazoo, I seriously doubted their ability to

The Members  
Radio, 12" (Genetic/Island)  
Produced by Martin Rushent, engineered by Dave Allen, this is the record 'Working Girl' hinted at, solid funk, total danceability, in fact disco. Like good disco, a very dubious lyric: 'Listen to the radio it's better than the stereo.' ???

'(If You) Can't Stand Up' is also fine funk, but star performer is 'Radio' dub version. Easily the record of the month.

The Fall  
Lie Dream Of A Casino Soul (Gap)  
The Fall's material can be superb

or shit. Opinions vary as to which is which, but I've no doubts about this one, it's brilliant. A hounding drumbeat behind Mark Smith's white rock-rap on a tune that's not very far from pop. Other side is 'Fantastic Life', nearly as good but a bit lengthy.

Bow Wow Wow  
Go Wild in the Country (RCA)  
From the album, Bow Wow Wow at their best. Those great jungle drums and even a worthwhile lyric. It comes in the 'Manet wouldn't buy me a Bow Wow Wow' sleeve. Flip 'El Boss Dicho' is a spaghetti western instrumental - better than most.

Belle Stars  
Iko Iko, pic disc (Stiff)  
Belle Stars are a London seven-piece all girl group who often support Madness. Their attractive moderne picture disc sports an old song. All good fun though. Flip, 'The Reason', once past its Comsat Angels intro is probably the better tune.

Human League  
Open Your Heart/Non Stop, 12" (Virgin)  
You all know 'Open Your Heart', don't you? 'Non Stop' is a lightweight dance instrumental. On the other side the two merge into a dub collage that is both strange and interesting but little more.

Yukihiko Takahashi  
Drip Dry Eyes (Alfa)  
Mr Takahashi is percussionist in Japan's Yellow Magic Orchestra. This is from his solo *Neuromantic*. Rather pleasant, with its vamy synth and sharp beats, but very reminiscent of modern Roxy Music. If you like this, check out

THE DABS EP  
'LOVE THE ARMY'  
OUT SOON ON PROPELLER

bounce back. But Martin Gore is capable of writing good singles. The white pop side in music and image is now dominant, an easier concept for white boys from Basildon.

Squeeze  
Black Coffee In Bed (A&M)  
With last year's *East Side Story*, Squeeze regained lost credibility. Taken from their album *Sweets From A Stranger*, 'Black Coffee In Bed' hinges on strong keyboards and vocal harmonies. Costello guests on backing vocals. A strong radio song.

The Comsat Angels  
It's History (Polydor)  
The Comsat Angels have been around for a few years now, without making much impression on the record-buying public, despite a couple of great albums. In similar territory to the Bunnymen, they demand intensive listening, and 'It's History' shows them achieving a much richer sound. I look forward to the next album.

Hunters & Collectors  
Talking To A Stranger (White Label)  
After the three track 12-inch EP released early in the year, I had great hopes for this Melbourne 'big band'. But their album is devoid of any comparable commercial material, excepting Talking To A Stranger, a delightful fusion of jazz-funk pop with multi-tiered percussion and distant horns. The B-side is the seven minute version.

Flaming Hands  
It's Just That I Miss You/Go Or Stay (Phantom)  
Sydney's Flaming Hands are an accomplished, if rather predictable unit, playing Australian rock and roll. 'Go Or Stay' is reminiscent of the Sunnyboys, but with sax and female vocals, while 'It's Just That I Miss You' is a more ambitious ballad.

Gary U.S. Bonds  
Out Of Work (Liberty)  
From his album *On The Line*, a typical Bruce Springsteen song, arranged and produced by Bruce and Miami Steve. It will no doubt appeal to fans of this genre. Me it leaves cold. Bonds' mock soul 'Bring Her Back' is better. Mark Phillips

essential this month ...

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