

# the SHAKE Summation

## Car Crash Set Imagination (Reaction)

A technological funk thang that's healthy but not inspiring. The words aren't really satisfactory. It's on the B-side you'll hear the best song the Car Crash Set have recorded, 'Those Days'. It manages to be both graceful and bouncy and is genuinely endearing. Nice singing all round too. I think I like the dub of 'Imagination' better than the original.

## Children's Hour Flesh (Flying Nun)

Twenty years seems a long way to go. Children's Hour bare on record seemed daunting at first listenings. Nothing there to distort reality into truth. But this is a record, not a performance, remember. 'Caroline's Dream', a theme if you like, sounds a little awkward but the strength of vision is very big. 'Go Slow', potentially savagely mocking, sounds here maybe like I should cry Oi but I read and resist. 'I Know Where She Lies' is the only one of five I can't find it in my heart to embrace - it sounds too much like a whine, obvious. Turning over is a turn for the best; 'Slaughterhouse' is savage, broken and no, this is not a lapsed Catholic singing. But 'Looking for the Sun'. After the opening narrative it bends upwards into something unselfconsciously psychedelic and superb. The beauty of speed.

Occasionally Chris Matthews makes a fool of himself but if he didn't there'd be no point. Children's Hour can play their instruments better now than when they made this record - it's that sort of situation. I could simply say it's one of the best records to be made here recently but it's not that simple. This is fact, this is not a lie, etc.

## The Mockers Alvison Park (Reaction)

The Mockers still don't convince me live but their ability to come up with the consistently insistent in records is beyond contention. A breezy pop song about escaping into fantasy - on that score it's not quite 'Rolling Moon' but it'll reach a lot more ears. With the radio playing it already the Mockers might get the hit they deserve.

## Dance Exponents Know Your Own Heart (Mushroom)

Ooooooh... oh dear. The great Australian levelling machine strikes again. The best production the Dance Exponents have had but easily the worst single. After repeated playings it's mildly catchy but the bounce and enthusiasm that made the Exponents a bit special isn't here. The flip 'Just Me and You' is wildly plagiaristic and not a whole lot better.

## Diehards Take My Hand (Hit Singles)

An alright sort of song that isn't bad but doesn't end up going far. I don't mind it but if the Diehards ever got as far as making an album this would be an album track. Pity is that two better songs are

squandered on dodgy live recordings on the flip. 'She Left' drops an upbeat tune behind a sad theme and works neatly and (here we go again) 'Hit That Beat' is simply a great pop song. With one Auckland radio station consistently playing what is really a dowdy old early demo of the song perhaps it might be time to record it properly? Nah, it's probably too late now. Again, pity.

## The Body Electric Dreaming in a Life (Jayrem)

A pretty competent piece, spiced up by some spirited bass twanging from Wendy Calder. Gary Smith remains a little too mannered a vocalist for my tastes but there's no denying he has a strong voice. The problem is (and it goes for the flip, 'Interior Exile' and the instrumental 'Rubber Knife') is that there's nothing really startling. If the songs were outstanding or the music was bolder I might like it.

## Russ Le Roq Shattered Glass (CBS)

Russ goes modern. More traditional in composition than the Car Crash Set which may mean it'll go further. Its charms are three; a wilful melody that can't decide what it wants to do, some nice bass playing and the delivery of the refrain 'Time spent on laughter is time that doesn't last.' Not a great single but he's got more chance with this one than any previous one.

## ECF Radio W.A.N.K. (New Future)

I'd been led to believe these guys were just noise merchants, but, on the contrary, the A-side here,

'Drop Me Off' is a pleasingly sparse, rather vividly etched piece of weekend. I hate the other two, 'Call Girl' and 'Sadists and Masochists', though - mainly for their lyrics.

## Terror of Tinytown I Am the Need (Ze Disc)

A quirky, rather dark little piece of electronic pop that makes me want to go and see ToT live again (I'd all but given up on them). The flip, 'See the Change' is a little straighter but not quite as good. Promise.

## Phil Judd Dream'n' Away (Mushroom)

A summery, whimsical song that doesn't really do a lot. It's not a bad song but I guess we've come to expect a lot from Phil Judd. The flip 'Sooner or Later' sounds like 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' Part II (really!). Both sides sound over produced. What I mean to say is, I don't mind either of them, but...

## Josie Rika and Lee Connolly Love is Just Around the Corner (Mushroom)

A MOR song with a shade too much guitar in it to be a proper MOR song. It doesn't do a great deal for me but then it's not meant to appeal to someone like me. I think the chorus is catchy enough for it to do well.

## Russell Brown



## SINGLES BAR

### Toots Hibbert Spiritual Healing 12" (Island)

Toots bounces back with his tribute to Marvin Gaye. A smooth and glorious summer disc that should be a huge crossover hit. Summer Sunday mornings start here.

### Aretha Franklin Get It Right (Arista)

The first lady of soul keeps comin' at ya. Slinky, tight and rich, this is a song for dancefloors everywhere. If this is the edited version where do I get the full-length job?

### The Creatures Right Now (Polydor)

Last month I suggested the Creatures would benefit from further instrumentation. 'Right Now' proves it. A cover of an early 60s hit by crooner Mel Torme, Siouxsie and Budgy drag in the large horn section and, hey presto, a fantastic little single. Love it.

### Siouxsie and the Banshees Dear Prudence (Wonderland)

Well after that we get to this. Yes, it is the old Beatles song and I don't really know what to say. I think this must be a stab at making money, it certainly reeks of it. Ordinary and uninspiring, it will probably be a huge hit as it was in the UK.

### Blancmange Blind Vision (London)

These two geezers have now developed a distinct style. This waffles around the same area as the album but is definitely a single. Closer to 'Feel Me' than 'Living on the Ceiling', it has positive appeal without being particularly memorable. Be warned: the 12" version is for marathon dancers only.

### Caiphus Semenya Angelina (Jive-Afrika) 12"

A handsome chunk of native African music treated to a dose of Western promotion. Fun rhythm, plenty of dance beat and a likeable chorus. Well worth the listen.

### Bruce Foxton Freak (Arista)

First solo effort from the Jam's former bassist. A full frontal assault, more reminiscent of the old band than Weller's later works. Unfortunately, it bears close resemblance to their bad album tracks - Foxton used to write those too. Steve Lillywhite is responsible for the dreadful overproduction.

### Culture Club Karma Chameleon (Virgin)

George collects his American influences and wears them on his sleeve. Nice harmonica floats in and out against a steady, if predictable, beat and we all end up singing along. Expect to see it as the last song on RTR for at least the next three weeks.

### Troy Tate Love Is (Stunn)

Ex Teardrops and Fashion guitarist unveils his first solo effort. A wistful acoustic guitar set to strings and a heartbroken lyric. Pleasant if not particularly startling.

### Roman Holiday Don't Try to Stop It (Jive)

The boys in sailor hats in another crossover romp. Pure stomp, not so different from 'Stand By', it goes round and round your head before accidentally spilling out of your mouth. Catchy but not exactly invigorating.

### JoBoxers Johnny Friendly (RCA)

They're up to the third single and still no pattern has developed. On first listening this seems a step back from 'Just Got Lucky'. Too many sudden time changes and a wandering melody. After a few hearings it gets the thumbs up, adventure and originality win out.

### Midge Ure and Mick Karn After a Fashion (Chrysalis)

Ultravox voice and Japan's bass-man combine to produce a song that falls somewhere between those two bands. The result? Something like a bad David Bowie album track - bleedin' naff.

### Prince Horny Toad (Warners)

What sort of title is that? In a departure from vamp disco, Prince tries a form of mutant rockabilly with dirty lyrics. The sooner he gets back to the disco the better.

### Robert Wyatt Shipbuilding (Stunn)

Back to real records. One of the best songs of the year, finally available in NZ. Written by Elvis Costello and Clive Langer, this is a beautiful, haunting lament that can be enjoyed no matter how much you hear it. Available in both 7" and 12" and in fantastic picture covers. Luvverly.

### Matt Fretton It's So High, 12" (Chrysalis)

Eighteen-year-old Matt seems to have a great future. Despite this record only making the lower reaches of the Brit charts he still got his mug on the cover of *Smash Hits*. Infectious, rhythmic synth-disco with a great chorus stolen from the Temptations' 'Psychedelic Shack'. Very clever and ever so slightly offensive, love it to death.

### Virgin Prunes Baby Turns Blue, 12" (Stunn)

Irish bad taste record of the week. A rampant blast of modern rock that deserves the attention of anyone who likes their music hard and fast. And with a cover like this, attention is certainly what it will get.

Mark Phillips

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