

**BUTTERGLORY**  
Are You Building a Temple in Heaven? (Merge)

Variouly hailed as the saviours of underground rock and the new messiahs of whispered cool, Butterglory appear from television stage left — that is to say, you won't find them nestled next to your average punk-by-numbers or funk-by-cucumbers video on Lax TV. Very refreshing and I wonder how long it can last?

To give you a little insight on why Lou Barlow rates them better than Pavement, this album of religious dedication to musical Introversion crosses all the old railway tracks of elitist fringe rock — whether it's the snappy weird pop of 'Sit In The Car', or the genuinely eerie piano chording of 'Boy Burning Down', Butterglory nod gently to their heroes/peers throughout *Are You Building a Temple in Heaven?*

More directly, you could surmise from 'On Button On' that the early Clean influenced their arrangement and (non-)production, and 'Rivers' takes a side swipe at the Velvet's 'Sister Ray'. They do the Chills better than Martin's session musos to date in 'The Halo Over Your Head (Turned Out to be Haunted Instead)', a truly sublime effort. Despite the r'n'r copy book being severely dog-eared these days, a fresher approach would be hard to find. Do us all a favour and buy four copies so we can see their videos wedged into prime time.

MAC HODGE

**CIBO MATTO**  
Viva La Woman (Warners)

Don't ask, who? Just shut up and listen. *Viva La Woman* is the smoothest, slickest trip hop excursion since Tricky's *Maxinquaye*. And it's the coolest hip-hop album since the Beasties' *III Communication*. And it's the most dreamy, freaky, funky, cooley CD of the year so far.

I'll explain. Miko Hatori and Yuka Honda are two hot Japanese tamales who've spent the last decade soaking up New York's eclectic and experimental musical madness. They've got an ear for what's hot; a jet engine here, drunken trumpet solos there, bossa nova, beats that aren't so much laidback as much as they're sprawled all over the couch. And they rap in this Japanese spiced, broken English. Every listen takes you deeper into their world.

The album opens with the appetiser, 'Apple', incorporating the sounds of ancient Japan with 90s New York trash culture; chimes and a traditional vocal wash over this crazy backwards violin sample, gurgling tone and stoned guitar riff. Yes, very *Bladerunner*. 'Beef Jerky' screams out: 'Who cares? / I don't care / A horse's ass is better than yours.' 'Sugar

Water' (the track Mike D is going to remix) has this female lounge warble like something out of the original *Star Trek*; and when the la, la, la chorus hits you and the acoustic guitar loop kicks in, well, it's time to boldly float where no one has gone before.

Punk, salsa, lounge, trip-hop, sci-fi big band. Welcome your ears to another world. Album of the month, without a doubt. Oh, and you pronounce their name 'Chee-bo Motto'; it's Italian for food crazy.

JOHN TAITE

**THE FOLK IMPLOSION**

Take a Look Inside (Communion)

The seriously prolific Lou Barlow, well into his second half of a century wicket of post-Dinosaur Jr. releases, teams up musically here with partner John Davis, described by his record label as the epitome of 'it takes a tough man to be sensitive'. Of course, aside from musical pedigree, this combo and its deluxe model will be familiar to those who have heared witness to the paedophilic celluloid masterpiece that is *Kids*.

This slab contains 14 toons, eight of which are lifted from their first cassette release through the UK's Chocolate Monk label. For the uninitiated, this is not a 'napalm noise terror death speed hard metal core' extravaganza, but 22 minutes of doodles recorded in John's room on Mondays and Tuesdays between 8.30AM and 4PM, mixed at the infinitely cool Fort Apache.

Briefly then, 'Waltzing With Your Ego' manages to come across as a high on epic (in two minutes and one second, flat!), in an early B-52s, jagged guitar kinda way. There's the usual assortment of Lou Barlow's lyrical muscle, as on the title track where he speculates on judgement day... 'On my knees before the angels cut me open and take a look inside,' sung with an incredibly cheesy, 60s pop melody — clever bastard! The 'Number 1 with a bullet' track has to be the last song, aptly titled 'Start Again', and at this length you can get to hear that particular masterpiece three times during an episode of *The X-files* you boring bugger!

MAC HODGE

**LOTION**

Nobody's Cool (Corlex)

Lotion are a couple of New Yorkers armed with guitars and brains. Imagine if J Mascis wasn't so slack, and if the passion of Dinosaur Jr.'s guitars spilled over into the lyrics and vocals. Not that they sound like Dinosaur Jr. all that much (apart from the heart pounding pacer, 'Dear Sir'). I'm just talking about the passion and the precision. To these guys, guitars are a moodswinging indicator of

how they get through the madness of reality, and the vocals are fire escapes to their souls.

There are no band names on the album or the bio, so I'll just say that *Mr Lotion's* vocals are a mixture of one part Michael Stipe, one part Evan Dando, and two parts Bob Mould. But then again, 'The Enormous Room' is a nod to the Red House Painters. Er, I guess, I just mean they sound very American — but in a good way. There's a definite sense of Bostonian songcraft to them, even though they're from New York, and they sure know how to get you to listen. They're striving to keep your ears open. Even a weaker track like 'Blind For Now' has five seconds of genius, where this church bell effect comes from out of nowhere and makes you listen some more. It's like they're saying: 'Bear with us for a minute, give it a chance.'

They're fiddling with the formulas and keeping themselves interested. Nobody's cool, but Lotion are close.

JOHN TAITE

**THE GLANDS OF EXTERNAL SECRETION**

Northern Exposure Will Be Right Back (Starlight Furniture Company)

From the bowels of an extraterrestrial space craft, chameleon munching, mad scientist kidnapping, schizophrenic, three-eyed inter-galactic loonies bash out a cacophony of short wave radio transmissions, to amuse each other and the few earthlings capable of understanding what all the noise is about.

Behind all the chaos there are moments of serenity, even beauty (after two minutes 'Space Needle' takes the form of the 3Ds, stops to chat about cement, then returns to the regular 3Ds program again). 'Pat the Bunny' is simultaneously soothing and discomfoting, wherein you can thrill to the sounds of a percussive fur ball coughing cat called Little Kuck (talented little fucker!). My fave, though, is the high speed playback of the severely malfunctioning refrigerator.

To summarise: Piloted by the usually sedate Barbara Manning and Seymour Glass, crewed by the unique Thinking Fellers Union Local 282, as well as Vomit Launch, Wank et al, this ship is powered courtesy of various tape loops and layerings from 1979 to 1994. It contains 50 percent 'Revolution Number 9' bites, and 50 percent visceral 'band' things. Definitely for those of you who want to be physically and mentally challenged; and what the hey, as 'Reality is Contraption' says... 'We're all going to die / It makes you happy, doesn't it?'

MAC HODGE

**NZ SINGLES**

**MARTIN PHILLIPPS & THE CHILLS**  
Surrounded  
CD Single (Flying Nun)

The wide-eyed, optimistic pop of 'Surrounded' is pleasing enough, but a lame choice for a single, lacking the instant hooks of other *Sunburnt* tracks 'New Millennium', and in particular 'Dreams Are Free' — which is a killer tune. The brisk 'Friends Again' sounds though it was written back-to-back with 'Rolling Moon', and is followed by 'Stupid Way To Go' and 'Yabba Dabba Do', two unadventurous, almost indistinguishable pop throwaways, that Martin surely can't dwell too long over.

**GARAGELAND**  
Beelines To Heaven  
CD Single (Flying Nun)

At Squid Bar last February, Mr Phillipps leaned over and sang the chorus of 'Different Drum' (a Mike Nesmith song made famous by the Stone Ponys) in my ear when Garageland played 'Beelines To Heaven', and he's correct, they are remarkably similar in vocal melody and chord progressions. 'Beelines...' glides on a sweet 60s-style harmonic melody that's catchiness guarantees them yet another hit at Student Radio, and deserves a wider audience. 'Bus Stops' is cleverly fragile, yet grand at the same time, while the stretched and tortured heart-breaker 'Cut It Out' ("What I am I gonna do with this love for you?") reaches 'phenomenal' territory. A heavily reverberated version of 'Bus Stops' called 'Bus Trips', rounds off a sublime release, that makes me even more fucked off my Garageland t-shirt shrunk in the wash.

**LOVES UGLY CHILDREN**  
Suck  
CD Single (Flying Nun)

With the London-recorded 'Suck' four-track single, Loves Ugly Children tear away screaming from their palatable pop past, and have a calculated stab at sounding like bogan pop rockers, especially on 'Rock-Pig' and the

excessively long 'Destroy The City' (propelled by a choice Lemmy-like bass riff). 'Suck' itself, boasts the colourful, screaming guitar dynamics of Simon McClaren, interspersed with roaring gat riffs, and feels more like the 'Personal World'-era LUC that I like, but overall, and with the inclusion of the stop/start speedster 'Heading South', I'd prefer not to go back for seconds.

**SUPERETTE**  
Touch Me  
CD Single (Flying Nun)

Always a winner in Superette's sometimes charisma-free live shows, 'Touch Me' chugs by on an infectious Ben Howe bass riff, and marks the singing debut of drummer Greta Anderson, adding her sugary vocals to those belonging to Dave Mulcahy. 'Catacombs' recalls the JPSE's more edgy, uneasy listening outings, and the tension-filled 'Cheezel', could possibly inspire fist-in-the-air-type rock antics. Also here is the demo version of 'Saskatchewan'.

**MUCKHOLE**  
Where's The Corndogs?  
CD EP (Felix)  
FUTURE STUPID  
Future Stupid  
CD EP (Felix)

The Muckhole and Future Stupid EPs are the first two releases on the new Auckland indie Felix, an off-shoot of the Wildside label.

Muckhole are heavily influenced by the DC hardcore scene, and show no mercy when unveiling their brand of speedy melodic pop. *Where's the Corndogs?*, features 'Overdrive' and 'Subterfuge', originally released on cassette last December, plus the Husker Du-ish 'Don't Wanna Know You', and the EPs top moment, the 'Muckhole Theme Song', an intensely powerful blast of pop that is everything that's magic about rock 'n' roll. A pure classic.

Future Stupid take a more dense, brutal approach to rock, that at times

('In The Basement', 'Big Dumb Future') is reminiscent of the more lumbering and pointless side of White Zombie. But when singer/guitarist Tony Hallum injects a dose of pummelling melody into the mix, as on 'Shovel', 'Rough Us Guts', and the bFM fave 'Shit Biscuit', they make perfect sense.

**THORAZINE SHUFFLE**  
An Affair  
CD Single (Chronic)

If Thorazine Shuffle's debut single was a library book etc... 'An Affair' certainly isn't the first tune to have a series of 'yeah, yeah, yeah's in the chorus. At the core, it's a fine, memorable pop song, though I still view it as tarnished by overplaying in the drumming department, a prerequisite in the early days of Second Child, but a less busy approach would seem more suited to 'An Affair's' simple structure. More impacting is the buzz saw pop of (the miles too long) 'Losing You', where vocals and guitars are left with room to spread out. Closing is the alternatively intricate and thrashy, 'Happy Camper'.

**ANNIE CRUMMER**  
State Of Grace  
CD Single (Warners)

The next two months will provide the perfect opportunity for watching a record company hype machine working at full throttle. Annie Crummer and her forthcoming album *Seventh Wave* will be everywhere. 'State Of Grace' is the first offering, a slick, feel-good, but ultimately forgettable, vocal epic. In 'the biz', track two 'Wisehead' is known as an AOR ballad. If the cap fits...

**SALON KITTY**  
Salon Kitty  
Cassette EP (Kittlylitter)

Pumpkinhead's Jason Peters keeps the tight, primal beats happening on Salon Kitty's debut release, that was recorded and mixed in three hours at Christchurch studio, Tandem. Salon Kitty delve below the belt to dredge up a sleazy blues/rock hybrid that celebrates filthy slabs of guitar and bass, and a vocalist whose every utterance originates in his bowel. And thank god one NZ band has the intestinal fortitude to ask the tough, probing questions; 'Whatever Happened to Rico Tubbs?'. Write to 47 Haslam Crescent, Hoonhay, Christchurch.

JOHN RUSSELL

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