

sure 'cos I didn't stay for band number four Das Phaedrus) they drew the crowd to the foot of the stage like bees to a honeypot, a way-tight three-piece: high-strung vocalist/guitarist Sean Sturm, gonzo bass player Michael Scott and drummer Mark Pollard. Together they manage to produce frenzied Hi-NRG indie guitar pop with an American edge (tho' I could just be saying that just because sometimes the guitarist wears glasses and a checked shirt), a relentless, noisome, rocking juggernaut underpinned with funkish basslines and overlaid with the odd mystical guitar moment but always loud, complex and intense. A blast.

Inevitably, after this the Cuban War Poets seemed a bit pallid. The line-up includes Peter from SPUD on bass and Luke (Ultimate) on drums. Singer Marnie was dressed LA alternative style in cloche hat and floral frock. I liked them best when the guitar flanged out and the mood got heightened but sometimes the sound got a little bass heavy and Luke's precision drumming almost too strong for the structure of the songs. They have a fey, fragile quality which is nice but lacked flavour over the long stretch of a full set. Off to tour the American college circuit next month, wish them luck.

**TONGUE'N'GROOVE NIGHT Barcelona**

Once upon a time before Peter and Mark happened in there, the bar would gyrate with chicks in white boots. Now on Wednesday nights at Barcelona the faggots and lizzies put on as little as possible for their own night of FUN — Tongue'n'Groove.

This miserable night, dahlings of *Monitor*, the Strokettes strutted it. Supposedly written in the car on the way to the gig, 'Johnny' was the highlight of a short set. Four songs for Chrissakes. Done in style, they looked great, musically insubstantial. Yes, that's cruel, BUT Lulu, Rachel and Rupert are definitely entertaining. Joined later by Buzz and Katrina for added depth and extra glamour. Any more of Buzz's anatomy and we could have sold it in Darlinghurst.

Hooray for Sam Hill mixing it up for the mixed crowd. Try it, you might like it.

**WARNERS, RUMBLEFISH, SALAD DAZE, ULTIMATE, PHOBIA Powerstation, Friday May 10.**

Damn these early starting events! Arriving fashionably late, I discovered I'd managed to totally miss Gestalt and catch just the last moments of Phobia, who were living up to their impressive reputation and sounding ridiculously heavy. Maybe having a successful (if highly independent) single has helped Salad Daze, because they pulled out a set of pretty straightforward hardcore that is lifted by a fine rhythm section and sheer energy all round. They even tried to totally liven things up by getting some 'sexy' dancers like real heavy metal bands have, but the dancers weren't very good and they kept falling off the stage. Better luck next time. Then on to the Warners. One of my more poetic colleagues described them as being NZ's answer to the Meteors or the Ramones, which is very true. The Warners have been around for years, have no time for the fickle winds of fashion and have

evolved into a virtual parody of themselves. There's no denying these boys can rip through, their sound is still a classic mix, sort of equal parts AC/DC / Motorhead style rock and traditional late 70s punk. They were loud and a lot of fun, right down to the bad stand-up comedy type stage banter and crowd participation vocals. New Zealand can be proud of the Warners, they're a great cultural experience.

Rumblefish were next up, and they maintained their class of late, albeit in a slightly messy manner tonight. A new and very heavy drummer is helping a lot and Dave Goodison is developing a major frontman persona, sort of Jim Morrison meets Prince at a Metallica show. Rumblefish really are a great band visually, from the rolling round on stage schtick through to the bass-as-a-percussion instrument approach they're hours of fun and sound awesome too.

Last up were Ultimate, who are sporting a new frontman. Although the last guy was pretty good, the new singer is probably better suited to what the band are doing. He's fully metal — a great staunch stage manner, lots of hair and powerful voice — he can hit those high notes and hold them.

Even with the late hour and dwindling crowd, Ultimate turned out a great set and hit their usual standards of excellence, particularly with 'Breaking The Silence', which could become a homegrown speed anthem. There certainly is a lot of talent and determination in young bands of late and well-organised showcase nights like this could become a regular thing, sort of a local N.M.S..

Miss them and miss out big time. KIRK GEE

**Rumours**

**AUCKLAND Cuban War Poets** are off on a US College circuit tour, both coasts, the result of their signing to Christchurch's JIA who have affiliations with Off Beat Records in America. JIA have pressed 20,000 CD copies of their *Beehive* cassette and have already sold some 10,000 copies to America.

**Rocks In The Attic** has finally bitten the big one, as **Honeylove** found out when they turned up to sound check and found security guards in residence.

**This Nation's Dreaming** have got their Fort Street Madhouse practise rooms up and running with PA, mikes etc. Straitjacket Fits and JPSE rehearse there and the place is professionally run. Phone 303-4486 to book a time. This Nation's Dreaming are now a three piece and will be releasing a tape or vinyl soon ...

♫Freak The Sheep LP now due in August and there'll be another one after that so stay tuned ... **Matthew Heine** has gone to Christchurch to produce noisemeisters **Into The Void** ...

**Queen Meanie Puss** are putting out a 10" with Flying Nun and a 7" with Philadelphia label Silbreeze ...

**Second Child** should be releasing their record *Magnet* in August through IMA HITT ... at last, a **Hallelujah Picassos** cassette can be found in a record shop near you nationwide. Titled *Peanut Butter* Now it's three songs, including a thrash monster called 'Black Spade Picasso Core'. Also available by mail from Red Tapes, Box 1869, Auckland, send \$5.30 including p&p.

**Godpeace** are looking for a vocalist, preferably with keyboard and / or guitar ability. They love "Herbie, Theonius and caffeine". Phone 303-4486 and ask for Richard.

**Sperm Bank 5** T-shirts available now

in three designs: a duck, the SB5 logo or a fluorescent live pic of Simon singing. Send \$25 to Box 489 Auckland 1. And \$10 if you wanna copy of their seminal five track cassette recording featuring the underground classic 'Put Another Log On The Fire'.

Assisted by *Music New Zealand*, singer songwriter **Derek Lind** will travel to the UK and the USA and UK to perform at Chicago's Cornerstone Music Festival (July) and UK's Greenbelt Festival (August). Artists appearing include Peter Case and Bruce Cockburn.

New club **Obsession** has taken over Fort Street's Megadrome space (downstairs from Surge). Deejays are **Andy Vann** and **Clive Frithe** (ex Zanzibar) and they are playing swingbeat, soul and hip-hop but no house.

**Gestalt** have an upcoming release ... and look out for yet another "all-star" band called **The Chocolate Slide**. DONNA YUZWALK

**CHRISTCHURCH**

**Black Spring** have split, with Andrew, Greg and Matthew teaming up with ex-Pit River Indian Adrian Ruka to become **260 Cinema** whilst Nigel Brown has joined **Scuzzbuckets**.

**David Hunt** and **Steve Birss** have teamed up to form the guitar orientated **Elevation** who hope to debut soon ...

**Simon McLaren**, who brought us **Blue Flesh Syndrome** and **Loves Ugly Children** now brings us **Sex-Trash Automobile** which apparently involves more McLaren originals with a ranting poet who strips and whips ... other new bands around include **Black Cat**, **the Babels**, **Beetroot** and **Rosemary's Garden**.

Ex-Android and 3 Guesses guitarist **Shane O'Neill** is now based in Nelson where he has formed **Walter Mitty** (touring soon) and opened the **Orinoco Studio** ... whilst in the deep south

**Pretty Wicked Head** and **The Desperate Men** have also opened their own studio to complement their **Oreti Record** label ... with all but drummer **Jessie White** remaining from the original line-up, **Fahrenheit** have now become **Big Sky** ... the **Topdressers** have struck a problem in their search for a record deal - they need a new vocalist, so if you think that's you see Al at Echo. Eldred Stebbing has expressed interest in working with the band.

In what must be a first (for a long time) for a local band, the **Renderers** have the main window display at Echo Records ... prepare for a thrash/death metal special at the Subway on 22 June when **Harbinger** and **Corpse** share the bill. ... blues rockers **Smokin' Jacket** lost their PA and all their gear when Ziggy's Bar went up.

**Sunburn** No.8 is due out shortly but in the meantime Grant McDonagh is working on a **Passage Tapes** compilation titled *Sharp Tongue* and has a new band with ex-members of **Summer Onions** and **2 White Eyes**.

**Hammerack** looks like being one of the first bands to try out **Geronimo Studios** ... local record stores report **Holy Toledo** vinyl is selling very well. J. GREENFIELD

**DUNEDIN**

While in Wellington during their recent national tour, the **Strange Loves** recorded 'She Knows What's Happening' and 'Crawl'. These will be released as a single at the end of July. This is instead of the album track 'Where Has She Gone'. The **Strange Loves** will be playing at the next Rad Ones party. Unknown Auckland bands the **Malchicks** and the **Nixons** may also be played ... the track listing for the Radio One compilation is almost finalised. Over 40 demos were sent in. The album will be coming out on Pagan and will feature 12 previously unreleased artists ... reverting to their original line-up and name **Funhouse** have made a return to the local scene ... last month also saw the return for only two nights of the shambolic sound of the **Groovy Brothers**.

**People's Promotions** are organising a Battle of the Bands. It's been a number of years since the city has had one of these ... new about town is **Lavender Touch** featuring the song writing talents of Russel Scoones (he of Smith v Smith).

The **Burgundy Bar** which last had a band two years ago has been demolished ... **The Doors** movie opened in Dunedin with two sold out 11 pm shows. The first saw the expectant St James crowd indulging in Mexican waves, that's before they were bored by the film. CRAIG ROBERTSON

**nz singles**

**EMULSIFIER Emulsifier (Wildside)**

Now 'Terrified' is a great song, pop music not afraid of itself. Very fine chorus and a guitar line similar to Nile Rodgers finer moments. The other three tracks work fine, the homage to Bootsy Collins and P-Funk is growing on me as is 'Theme'.

'Rock Your Radio' is perhaps a piss take of "rock" music as lifestyle, the AC/DC in the tape deck blasting through the car speakers, sun glinting through warm pub pets. It's a westie nirvana that most of us can only dream of. Whatever, 'Rock Your Radio' sounds good to me, piss take or not. KERRYBUCHANAN

**STRAW PEOPLE Blue (Pagan)**

Like these people, they make very good, listenable vaguely New Age House style dance music, and that's exactly what 'Blue' is. 'Mellow' beats, cooing soulful vocals and a great production, this really sounds right. Unobtrusive and catchy, I could definitely stand to hear this on my radio. KIRK GEE

**MERENIA & WHERE'S BILLY? U Know (I Like It)**

And I like the B-side. Merenia has that beautiful sultry voice, but on 'U Know' there's an annoying semi-spoken chorus and the band doing an early 80s funk thing to contend with. 'Hardline' is just sparse, simple and lovely. Merenia can wipe the floor with most 'sophisticated' singers around, given the right material she should be a star. KIRK GEE

**MC OJ AND RHYTHM SLAVE Body Rhymes (Protect Yourself) 7" / 12" (Southside)**

Mr OJ and Mr Slave on the safe sex tip, going to the chemist for a "party pack" so they can "play and spray". Do our youth need to hear this? Sure they do. Will radio play it? Well, that's another story. Four mixes on the 12", a bit sparse perhaps but the Supremes sample is good. Works a lot better on the 'Radio' and 'Original 909 Mix', more going on, and of course Ms Teremoana Rapley's vocals come on strong. KERRYBUCHANAN

