VARIOUS ARTISTS Until The End of the World (Warner Bros)

In the liner notes Wim Wenders thanks the various musicians for responding "to our proposition of projecting themselves into the year 1999". The assembled cast with this brief and Wender's languid directorial pace as visual stimuli have provided a soundtrack that is unified in its leisurely and slightly ambient cool and remote facade

A true soundtrack in that the songs were written for the film rather than the usual plundering of past catalogues for cineamatic atmospherics, the album consequently succeeds well as an entity. In fact most of the artists here distinguish themselves even in the light of recent high standards.
On 'Sax and Violins' Talking Heads

are smooth, menacing funk reminiscent of Speaking In Tongues, Julee Cruise extends her camp, sleepy decadence on 'Summer Kisses, Winter Tears' while Crime and The City Solution's 'The Adversary' should win this year's Leonard Cohen award and that's praise! Lou Reed's What's Good' is urbane, vintage Reed — the man on form, a condition that could be used to describe REM's 'Fretless', a song that would have positively shone on Out of

Costello's version of the Kink's 'Days' shifts the focus of the song from one of lilting appreciation to one of sombre remembrances — probably appropriate in the context of this film, but hardly an improvement on the original. Welcome kitsch melodrama arrives with Nick Cave's 1'll Have You Till The End of the World', but the second half of this sound track should be remembered for Depech Mode's funeral waltz 'Death's Door' and U2's cataclysmic 'Until The End of the World', the fitting conclusion to a body of music that's portentious, introspective and very effective at evoking the end of the world as we GEORGE KAY

LUNG Cacti (Yellow Bike)

The bad news is that Aucklanders have stopped pretending their wretched 70s parties are "ironic": pre-punk values are totally dominant. More disturbing even than ubiquitous muso-dom and the definition of rock 'n' r** I by 12-bar blues conventions rather than force and energy is the fact that suddenly everybody gives a shit about popularity again. Just because the Headless Chickens seduced the pre-teen market and Nirvana conned a few million Americans with their bland folk-metal compromise, it's become unacceptable not to want to "cross over", to have yourself de-toothed and de-clawed and beg

for corporate patronage.
The good news is that somewhere in Palmerston North Dave White of Lung is singing "She says fuck you and turns the gun on herself". Apart from being an electrifying moment in a damn fine hate song that line could be a metaphor for the way Lung work: they court popular oblivion by taking their pugilistic anti-pop as far as it can go and, if ever it can be said of anyone, THEY DON'T CARE! Most of the songs here are fast and aggressive, built around ferocious geometric riffs, playing on the eternal tension between sparsness and noise overload, no-wave guitar expansion and skeletal post-punk structures. White's voice is more of a flat, disgusted sneer than a Gow/ Campbell breakdown howl, its violence all implied and thus potentially limitless.

Departures from this forumula are 'Hardwired', a six-minute sprawl which fills its space rather too thinly, and 'Sleep', an industrial nightmare with a perversely addictive two note

So don't despair, Aucklanders, just spit at the guy doing the drum solo, close your eyes and wait for the Manawatu invasion.

MATTHEW HYLAND

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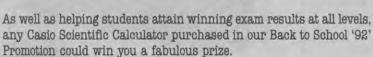
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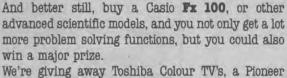


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