



Faster Pussycat

couldn't come from anywhere else. You'll probably hear it on a tribal station near you, or squeezed amongst the black American pop on Auckland's Mai FM.

CHRIS BOURKE

FASTER PUSSYCAT
Whipped! (Elektra)

Signed at the same time as G'n'R, FP were predicted to be the next big thing. Their first LP was real fun and when *Wake Me Up When It's Over* came along they discarded some of the tack in favour of some grooves. Now the image has become even more secondary to the songwriting.

Whipped! sees Taimé Downie and co further defining the FP vision and packing a mean punch with tunes by the truckload. 'Nonstop To Nowhere' opens up and if this sucker got on the radio the boys might have a chance of getting some of the recognition they dearly deserve. 'Body Thief' is almost Ministry with harmony while 'Big Dictionary' is one of those double entendre numbers that these cats are so good at, inspired, like so much of their sound, by Aerosmith ('Big Ten Inch Record'). 'Maid In Wonderland' is a total groover and 'Cat Bash' is a collection of samples and abusive phone messages set to a chorus of "We don't give a shit what the fuck you think".

A touching tribute to the sadly departed Andrew Wood of Mother Love Bone comes in the form of 'Mr Love Dog'. It's a definite stand out with vocal back up supplied by the Pasadena Boys Choir. Let's hope Taimé has learned from Andrew's bad habit mistakes or we could lose him in the same way.

Faster Pussycat have developed into a mean, lean animal but still play honest rock n'roll so *Whipped!* deserves a thrashing.

GEOFF DUNN

BARRY SAUNDERS
Long Shadows (Pagan)

The way Pagan records tells it, this project was intended to be fun: Warratah's vocalist Barry Saunders grabbed his guitar, a few beers and headed for the studio to record some of his favourite country songs. Pagan says the album reflects that. But more beer would have loosened Long Shadows up nicely.

Anyone who records a set of covers lays themselves open to criticism that they are out to turn a quick buck. Not this time. Saunders performs a set of Ian Morris-produced classics which are more closely related to the chug-a-lug country of the 50s and 60s than the ass-wiggling Billy Ray Cyrus country-rock of 1992.

This is a worthy album, well sung. Maybe it is too worthy. Cover versions should be either reverential or damned good fun. The two Nitty Gritty Dirt Band *Will The Circle Be Unbroken* albums covered both of those bases but Saunders lands somewhere between. You aren't stunned by a version which lifts a song into a higher plane and you don't get the feeling

Saunders was having himself a great time in the studio.

The 11 songs are goodies though — 'Cry, Cry, Cry' by Johnny Cash; 'Guess Things Happen That Way' by Jack Clement; and 'I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive' by Hank Williams are the pick.

KEVIN NORQUAY

THE FLAMING LIPS
Hit To Death In The Future Head (Warners)

Direct from a strange and twisted corner of rock's left field via Oklahoma city, come the Flaming Lips with their fifth album *Hit To Death In The Future Head*. Listening to this album is the aural equivalent of viewing the world through a kaleidoscope. Songs collide into one another, snippets of sound fly off on their own tangent and melodies shimmer by almost subliminally. Sound like a confused morass? Not so — the sheer inventiveness and originality displayed manages to hold everything together as an (almost) coherent whole.

Over a solid base of mighty fine mid-western garage/grunge rock, the Lips lay on slab after slab of their own peculiar brand of psychedelia. It never smothers the songs but does give them an intentionally hefty bear hug on a couple of occasions.

Lyrics never veer far from the ridiculous, from the opener 'Talkin' 'bout the Smilin' Death Porn Immortality Blues' through highlights such as 'Gingerale Afternoon' and 'Frogs' to the closing track 'Hold Your Head'. In fact, it's not the final track. To ensure that we, the consumer, get our dollar's worth from the CD format, the Flaming Lips have thoughtfully tagged on 29 minutes of unlistenable post-industrial noise. True value for money.

MARTIN BELL

SINGLES
Movie Soundtrack (Sony)

Movie soundtracks are usually a mixed bag, most of which you don't like, but now some wise-ass has decided to go and make a movie about a very influential and very popular little city called Seattle. Here we have a soundtrack that will be immensely popular because of the current liking by the kids for bands featured here like Pearl Jam and Soundgarden. But this is a pretty cool soundtrack, though it would have been nice to see a veteran Seattle band like the Melvins here — definitely the missing link.

This compilation does step out of Seattle for a couple of "raise your pint to this one mate" songs from Paul Westerberg. His songs have a thigh slapping feel, with lots of "na na na" type choruses. Not very rousing at all. The two old dears from Heart are now in a band called the Lovemongers who do not appeal at all. Lots of wailing witches type vocals and middle aged acoustic guitars. This song should be on the *Robin of Sherwood* soundtrack.

However, the rest of the tracks are pretty damn pleasing to the ear, even the Pearl Jam

songs. Considerably better than anything on *Ten*, these ones have a more powerful feel, big massaging bass lines and are less bland.

There are too many highlights to mention. Mother Love Bone's 'Chloe Dancer', a seriously yummy sad song; 'Overblown' by Mudhoney, proving that they're still the bitchiest rockers (in their cool, simplistic way) in Seattle; Jimi Hendrix (get out your incense for this one); Screaming Trees 'Nearly Lost You' produced by Gumball man Don Fleming, and 'Drown' by Smashing Pumpkins, a beautiful, dreamy number with many explosions of pure bliss and psychedelic guitar. Awsey.

But the coolest track comes from Soundgarden with 'Birth Ritual'. Brace yourself, grab something lethal and hold on for dear life, this one's gonna push you off the edge and make you toss the lot down your throat without regret, leaving you drunk and joyous in its noise. Pure libido grooves, exploding heartbeat drumming, superb.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

CHRIS BAILEY
Savage Entertainment (White Records)

FALLING JOYS
Psychohum (Volition)
TALL TALES AND TRUE
Revenge (RooArt)
Australia has had its fair share of off-beat animals. Ed Kuepper, Cave, MacLennan, Forster, Kilbey and Chris Bailey don't fit easily into pre-conceived notions of rock n'roll normality. Take Bailey, a man of many parts, most of them working. He emerged as a pioneer of Oz punk and became one of the most colourful and enigmatic songwriters of the 80s. His last album *Demons*, with its big Memphis budget diffused the Bailey charisma and psychosis but ample compensation is at hand with *Savage Entertainment*, his best music since the Saints' *All Saints Day*. Recorded in a two week rush before his European tour this year, the album is a decadent and varied exorcism of the indulgences, fears and insights of an Australian goth. Described by some as his *Blood on the Tracks*, this isn't far off the mark, although ghosts of Cale's *Paris 1919* brush across the surfaces.

Whatever, in magnificent down-beat form, Bailey releases gothic visions of excess on 'The Road To Oblivion', 'Babylon' and 'Getting Friendly With The Devil'. Oskar Salazar's beautiful pipes on 'Hotel de la Gare' reinforce Bailey's drunken melancholy and on 'Do They Come For You' an understated nudge of orchestration keeps his ambivalent hopes and paranoia alive. Superb.

On the title track Bailey reaches the conclusion that "we all need savage entertainment to brighten up an otherwise ordinary day". Here is your classical savagery — restrained, lucid and wonderfully entertaining.

Tearing ourselves away from the devil's drinking partner we confront the Falling Joys whose *Wish List* debut had them back-

Bring On The Noise!



MEGADETH *Countdown to Extinction*

With the precision of an atomic clock, Megadeth's *Countdown to Extinction* documents the demise of society as we know it. *Countdown to Extinction* is the fifth album and soon-to-be metal classic from the outspoken thrash masters, featuring from-the-gut speed-core guitar riffs. This latest offering debuted at No. 2 in the US and went Top 5 in NZ. Says *Kerrang Magazine* — "Countdown to Extinction is tight. These masterpieces race with energy and musical tension, keeping your ears gripped to your speakers."

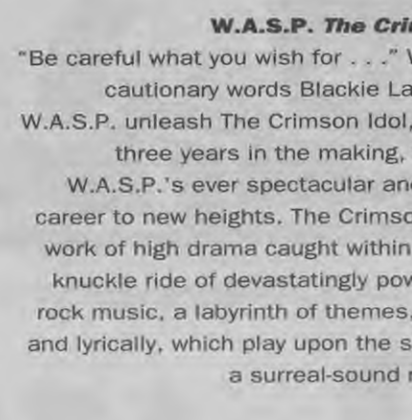
IRON MAIDEN *Fear of the Dark*

"Re-emerging after a lengthy break, Iron Maiden are back in '92 with an album that rates among their best." *Rip It Up*. *Fear of the Dark* is Iron Maiden's 10th album, and undoubtedly their finest yet. The album debuted at No. 1 in England and went Top 5 recently in NZ. Iron Maiden are currently on a world tour and rumoured to be touring here in October.



BLACK SABBATH *Dehumanizer*

After almost a year of rumour, speculation and hearsay, what started as a whisper has now reached a thundering crescendo . . . Black Sabbath are back! The classic line-up of Tommy Iommi, Geezer Butler, Ronnie Dio and Vinny Appice have returned with *Dehumanizer*, their finest album to date.



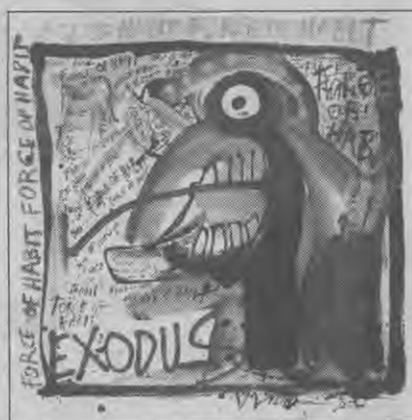
W.A.S.P. *The Crimson Idol*

"Be careful what you wish for . . ." With those cautionary words Blackie Lawless and W.A.S.P. unleash *The Crimson Idol*, an album three years in the making, that takes W.A.S.P.'s ever spectacular and colourful career to new heights. *The Crimson Idol* is a work of high drama caught within the white-knuckle ride of devastatingly powerful hard rock music, a labyrinth of themes, musically and lyrically, which play upon the senses like a surreal-sound nightmare.



EXODUS *Force of Habit*

Exodus, one of the principle forerunners of speed/thrash metal are still dishing out neck aches worldwide. Put it down to *Force of Habit* — this is an album that booms, not squeaks, the songs having a weightier, thicker and heavier feel to them than ever before. Explains guitarist Gary Holt. "This album is heavier, but more accessible, there are plenty of hooks and shit, but it's bone crushing . . ." The Exodus attack is back!



SLAUGHTER *The Wild Life*

The Wild Life embodies musical change, the textures are varied and the band's softer, mellower side has remained thoroughly intact. "The Wild Life is one of the strongest rock albums released this year, the album explodes — both musically and vocally . . . but it is the record's diversity that will really knock you out." *Music Connection*.



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