

One of us should remove

the shades



#9
80p

BANDIT QUEEN

WHITEOUT

ELIXIR

CUCKOOLAND

2 FLEXIS

Yeah, well. Slightly delayed due to the World Cup and Wimbledon, but here it is at last. So there's not much in this issue. I thought it would be a good idea not to do any interviews this time. I didn't feel like doing any and I'm sure bands must hate doing them all the time. Normal service will be resumed in issue 10. Luckily the flexis are so amazing that you won't mind the price increase. There was supposed to have been a freebie tape this time round, which would have justified the price increase despite the lack of content. These are not free flexis - they're included in the cover price this time.

I bet you thought I was joking with the name change last time, but I can assure you it's permanent. I did consider shortening it to 'One Of Us', like the Abba song. Or 'Shades', but that sounded like a soul mag. As you know by now, it's named after the seminal sunglasses after dark film 'Subway', which is available to rent at a very reasonable price from Swiss Cottage library.

Despite being the main substance of this issue, most of the reviews are still only based on half of the first track, unless it's any good, so I'm sorry if any of the records I dismissed turned out to be okay. One * is the lowest mark, five ***** is only for the best stuff, and none for fanzines because I didn't think it was fair to grade them. The older stuff is pulling up the rear.

Buy some back issues. They've got interviews in.

One Of Us Should Remove The Shades #8
The Muffs, Madder Rose, Pram, Drugstore, Luscious Jackson, Trumans Water, and a flexi with Flinch and Peach.

Big Muff #6
Velocity Girl, Credit To The Nation, Even As We Speak, Huggy Bear, and a flexi with Drugstore and Ventilator.

Big Muff #5
Headcleaner, Heavenly, Pavement and others, and a flexi with Action Swingers and Love Blobs.

Big Muff #4
Action Swingers, Blake Babies, Our American Cousins, Sunshot, Wedding Present. No flexi.

Big Muff #3
AC Temple, Hole, Primitives, Ween, Whipped Cream. No flexi.

Big Muff #2
The best of 1990, with a Faith Healers flexi.

All the above are 50p each, except #2 which is £1. Include an A4 SAE with a 29p stamp for the first one + an extra 7p for each additional one.

Neil Boyd, PO Box 2714, London, NW6 2HS, England. 071 328 3411

Since most of my musical intake comes from gigs, I thought I'd pad out some spaces with a few live reviews. The traditional breeding ground of the Falcon and Bull & Gate seems to be suffering a bit of a setback at the moment as the Falcon struggles with council legislation and Jon Beast seems to have re-established the Bull & Gate as a dive where no-hopers play to their mates. Other small venues in London worth going to are the Sausage Machine (at the Russell Arms, down a bit from Mornington Crescent, although they've had a few licensing problems there too), the PIAO Club (at the Laurel Tree, round the back of the Underworld), and the Dublin Castle in Camden Parkway. The Astoria and Astoria 2 in Charing Cross Road are living a bit of a renaissance at the moment as well. Of course it's always worth getting out of London every now and then, and here are the places that are easy to get to on public transport (even easier if you drive of course).

Windsor Old Trout. Get a train to Windsor Riverside (from Waterloo I think, or Richmond or Clapham Junction) and walk towards the riverside for about 2 minutes. Last one back after 11 and gigs usually finish before then. Young and enthusiastic crowd.

Brighton Concorde. I've never got a train here, but apparently it is possible to get a train back from. Venue looks like a tea shop and it's about as close to the pier as it's possible to get without actually being on it. Crowd suffering from the cruel axing of 'Turn It Up' on Radio Sussex.

Oxford Jericho Tavern. Get the Oxford Tube coach every half hour from Victoria or Marble Arch. Last one back is 11.15. Don't get the other Oxford bus because the last one back is much earlier. Go to the end of the line and go out the entrance opposite the way the bus comes in and walk for about five minutes. Keep walking another couple of minutes for the best burger bar in Britain.

Harlow Square. Train from Liverpool St to Harlow Town. Last one back about 11.30, in time for last tube. Your best bet is to find a flyer and follow the map on the back, or ask someone where Fourth Avenue is. Excellent venue, cheap beer, good sound, good view of the stage. My number one choice any day.

I'm a bit politically confused at the moment. I wept when John Smith died even though I'd barely noticed him before, Tony Blair seems to be becoming a Tory, and I don't know that I agree with Jimmy Knapp. Plus, I went on the first political march I've ever been on, because I felt that the Criminal Justice Bill is such a widespread infringement on liberty that I had to show my objection, but there was no kind of event organised apart from a few random speakers who just seemed to want to have a go at anything or anyone vaguely political. Despite the huge numbers of people that turned up, I don't suppose it did any good because no-one was listening and there was nothing to listen to. Makes me want to go see my MP, but I won't.

"Happy is an adult word. You don't have to ask a child about happy, you see it. They are or they are not. Adults talk about being happy because largely they are not." - Jeanette Winterson.

MADDER ROSE

DINGWALLS 29 JUNE 94

'A Special Acoustic Performance' it says on the ticket for the all-seater Dingwalls. So as not to spoil the view for everyone (I guess) the eager few squat uncomfortably on the small piece of floor space at the front, next to a sign advising us that if we want to talk we should do so between songs or at the back bar. Billy and Mary do indeed enter the stage strapped into acoustic guitars. Billy's lasted for about two songs and was then swapped for his usual green Cyclops. Mary managed to stay with the hollow-body about halfway though the set. Only Chris kept his almost acoustic bass throughout, and Johnny's contribution was to play bongos on a couple of songs, using a pair of Evian bottles as drumsticks.

The cover versions are highly in evidence tonight, although a few of Madder Rose's own songs take particularly well to the lower-powered format. 'What Holly Sees' is especially revered, as though it had been designed for Mary's vocals to come strongly across over the gentle tap of bongos. This really is perfection, without any of the illness or excessive tuning problems that frequently raise their head. Billy tries to claim that their first ever single, 'Baby Gets So High' was copied from The Fabs, whoever they might be.

After announcing 'Sweat' by 'The Rolling Stones before they really did anything', Billy inexplicably says "if you see the Rolling Stones, kill them". To keep the acoustic mood, Mary quietly urges Billy not to use any feedback on their version of Phil Spector's (with a little help from The Ronettes) 'Baby I Love You', which somehow sounds more like a Kylie tune, and it soon transposes into Madder's own 'Sleep, Forever'.

Early on Mary admits that they knew they would have to talk to the audience more tonight, but Billy seems to be making most of the running, and he keeps congratulating Johnny, the big drummer in the cowboy hat and large rat tattooed on his arm. "I don't often listen to Johnny, but when I do he's beautiful".

As another rapturously called-for encore ends, enthusiastic fans rush forward with the hope of grabbing some souvenir to accompany the tickets they got Mary to sign earlier, and I unfurl my legs from the cramp which had hitherto gone un-noticed and leave knowing that Madder Rose can do no wrong in any arena.

TRIPMASTER MONKEY

When I arrived late at the Tripmaster Monkey show they were rocking with such energy I thought this must be their last song, so I pushed to the front to get an intense dose. But there was no sign of stopping. For the next 40 minutes they played as if every song was their last song.

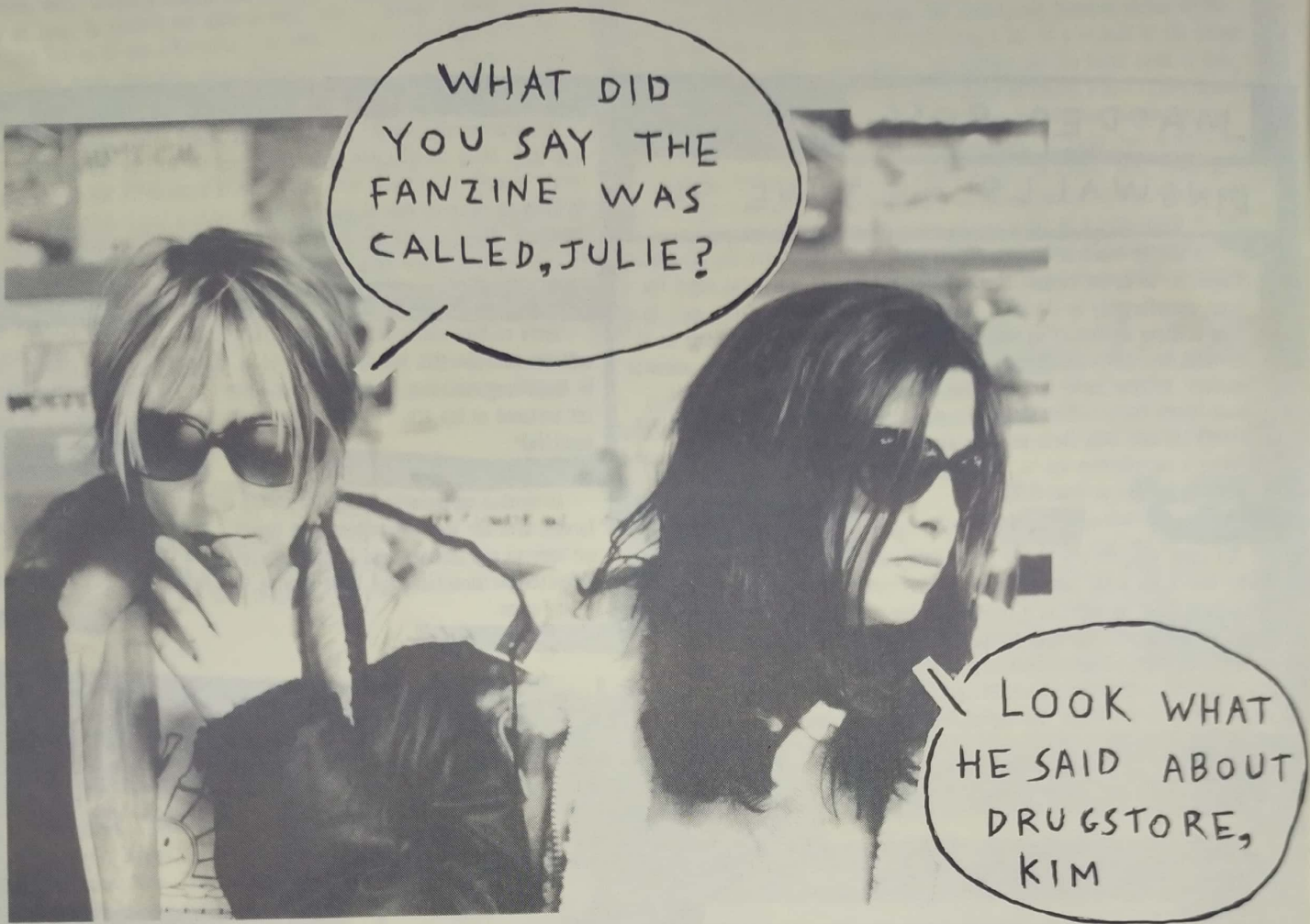
Tripmaster Monkey are high school kids from Iowa, wherever that is, again proving that grunge power only needs one guitar. And that's college grunge, like one of the Washington DC bands, eg Velocity Girl, as opposed to the heavy Seattle grunge of a million others.

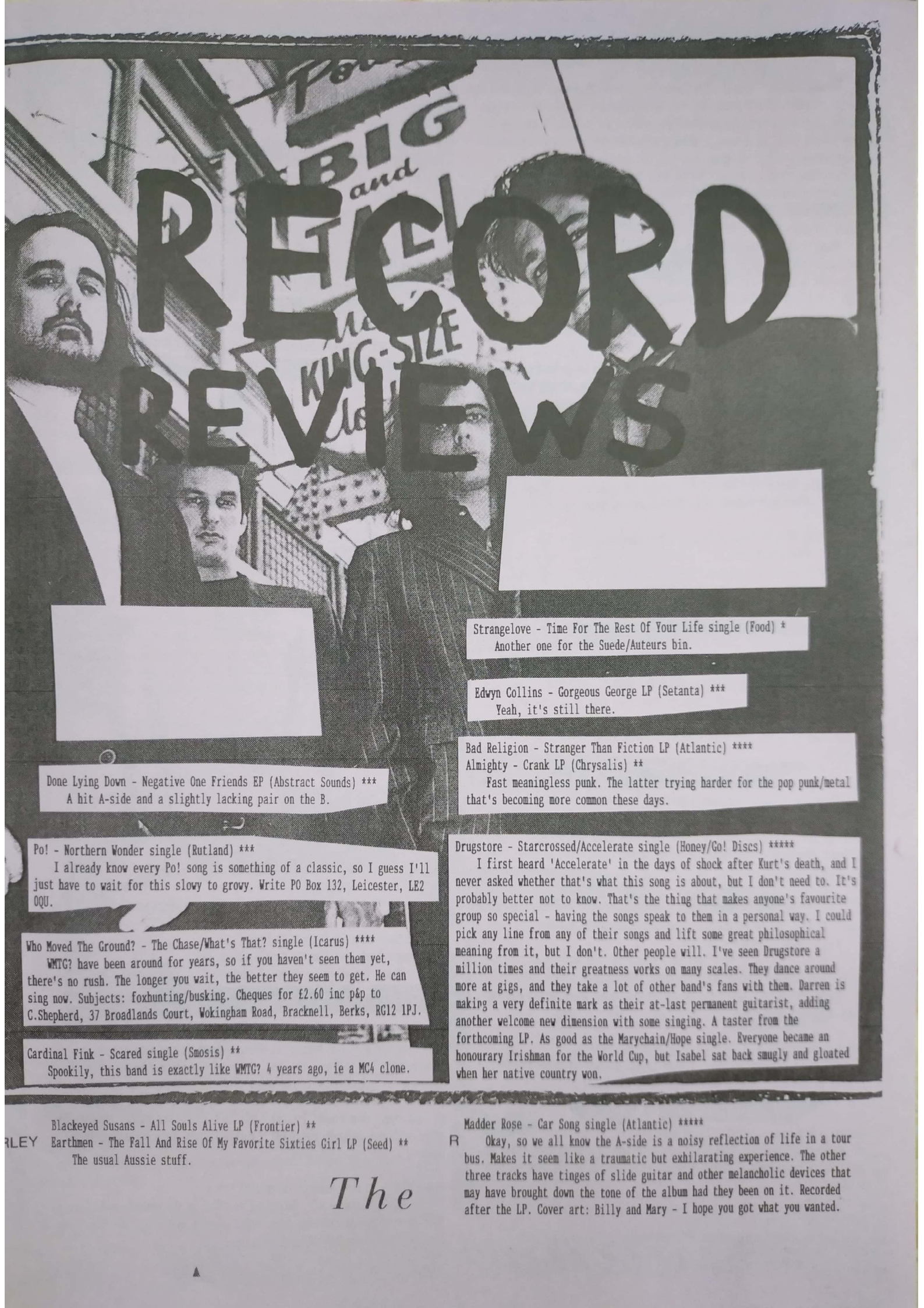
Like Sleeper, who they were sharing the limelight with on this occasion, they live up to a teeny heart throb image, although for rather different reasons.

The singer never stands still, so when he's near the mic stand, he clutches onto it, not as some kind of safety device, but apparently to try and hold himself down. When away from the mic he'll be cartwheeling across the stage, or dancing on the crash barrier, or hanging from the lighting. He occasionally feels a need to explain the meaning of a song but never quite manages to do it adequately, instead starting to explain some vaguely related trivia and then stopping mid sentence.

At the time they were over, they had a single out on Ché - the delicate purple 'Shutters Closed'/'Mudslide' - and an album was promised for June/July.







RECORD REVIEWS

Done Lying Down - Negative One Friends EP (Abstract Sounds) ***
A hit A-side and a slightly lacking pair on the B.

Po! - Northern Wonder single (Rutland) ***

I already know every Po! song is something of a classic, so I guess I'll just have to wait for this slow to grow. Write PO Box 132, Leicester, LE2 0QU.

Who Moved The Ground? - The Chase/What's That? single (Icarus) ****

WMTG? have been around for years, so if you haven't seen them yet, there's no rush. The longer you wait, the better they seem to get. He can sing now. Subjects: foxhunting/busking. Cheques for £2.60 inc p&p to C.Shepherd, 37 Broadlands Court, Wokingham Road, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 1PJ.

Cardinal Fink - Scared single (Smosis) **

Spookily, this band is exactly like WMTG? 4 years ago, ie a MC4 clone.

Strangelove - Time For The Rest Of Your Life single (Food) *
Another one for the Suede/Auteurs bin.

Edwyn Collins - Gorgeous George LP (Setanta) ***
Yeah, it's still there.

Bad Religion - Stranger Than Fiction LP (Atlantic) ****
Almighty - Crank LP (Chrysalis) **

Fast meaningless punk. The latter trying harder for the pop punk/metal that's becoming more common these days.

Drugstore - Starcrossed/Accelerate single (Honey/Go! Discs) *****

I first heard 'Accelerate' in the days of shock after Kurt's death, and I never asked whether that's what this song is about, but I don't need to. It's probably better not to know. That's the thing that makes anyone's favourite group so special - having the songs speak to them in a personal way. I could pick any line from any of their songs and lift some great philosophical meaning from it, but I don't. Other people will. I've seen Drugstore a million times and their greatness works on many scales. They dance around more at gigs, and they take a lot of other band's fans with them. Darren is making a very definite mark as their at-last permanent guitarist, adding another welcome new dimension with some singing. A taster from the forthcoming LP. As good as the Marychain/Hope single. Everyone became an honorary Irishman for the World Cup, but Isabel sat back smugly and gloated when her native country won.

Blackeyed Susans - All Souls Alive LP (Frontier) **

Earthmen - The Fall And Rise Of My Favorite Sixties Girl LP (Seed) **
The usual Aussie stuff.

Madder Rose - Car Song single (Atlantic) *****

Okay, so we all know the A-side is a noisy reflection of life in a tour bus. Makes it seem like a traumatic but exhilarating experience. The other three tracks have tinges of slide guitar and other melancholic devices that may have brought down the tone of the album had they been on it. Recorded after the LP. Cover art: Billy and Mary - I hope you got what you wanted.

The

Velocity Girl - ¡Simpatico! LP (Sub Pop) *****

Everyone sounds like everyone else these days. There's a bunch of bands around sounding like V Girl, and the kids themselves sound like a Poptons comeback. I don't know why they've let Archie sing so much. I suppose it's kind of his band. As a song, I think Lush's 'Hypocrite' beats any one of these songs at their own game, but as a collection, I'll stand by V Girl. If we're naming songs, I'd say 'There's Only One Left Left To Say' does it for me (despite the nearly Primitives title).

Fuzzy - Fuzzy LP (Seed) ****

Thank fuck! A decent record at last (did you notice the reviews getting more and more cynical as I work towards this point? (in reverse order)). Very much like Velocity Girl who I'm going to listen to tomorrow (see above) but that's definitely not a fault. Probably more like Veruca Salt as far as career development goes.

Guided By Voices - Bee Thousand LP (Matador) **

Another obscure American band that think it's a laugh to have a major label support them. Deliberately copying the crap bits of the Beatles.

Raincoats - Extended Play EP (Blast First) ***

Sounds like Little Mel from Rocky Horror.

Ivy - Lately EP (Seed) ***

Somewhere between The Cranberries and Sterelab.

Crazy Gods Of Endless Noise - Iron Long single () *

More funky poo.

Breeders - Head To Toe EP (4AD) ***

Nice that they've done a 10 inch only release.

BGR sampler (BGR) *

A load of crap has-beens who've been moping around ever crap rock band going and are still doing the same old crap. Crap.

Jale - Dreamcake LP (Sub Pop) **

I'd like to go on tour with them to Ireland with Velocity Girl. No I wouldn't.

Robert Forster - I Had A New York Girlfriend LP (Beggars Banquet) *

A cover version album, with the student classic 'Echo Beach', which he manages to kill. The same goes for Heart's 'Alone' and The Monkees' 'Look Out Here Comes Tomorrow' among others. I never thought I'd prefer I Heart song to anything. Poo to you.

Gene - Be My Light Be My Guide single (Costermonger/Deceptive) **

Radio friendly washover garbage.

No Further Xcuses - Flavor Station single (Venue) ***

I surprise myself sometimes by liking this bass-dragging hip-hop rap. Less offensive than Ice-T.

Ultraviolence - Life Of Destructor LP (Earache) ****

And again. A hard and heavy techno thing. Not one of those too fast pieces of crap. A slightly more dangerous 2 Unlimited.

Hemlock - Dry Socket single (Liquid Meat) **

Apparently San Diego leftovers, but it's pretty good as that goes. The usual heavy type stuff. I had to mention this because it's a limited hand screened sleeve.

Alice Cooper - It's Me single (Epic) *

Alice has done some reasonable stuff in the past. So did Meatloaf.

G Love - Okeh LP (Epic) *

Who's sending me this stuff? You've got the wrong address. This is jazz.

Richard Bone - Qurik Work LP (Quirk) *

Richard Bone - Ambiente LP (Quirk) *

Bog off.

Grotus/Trans-Global Underground - Opiate Of The Masses EP (Alternative Tentacles) *

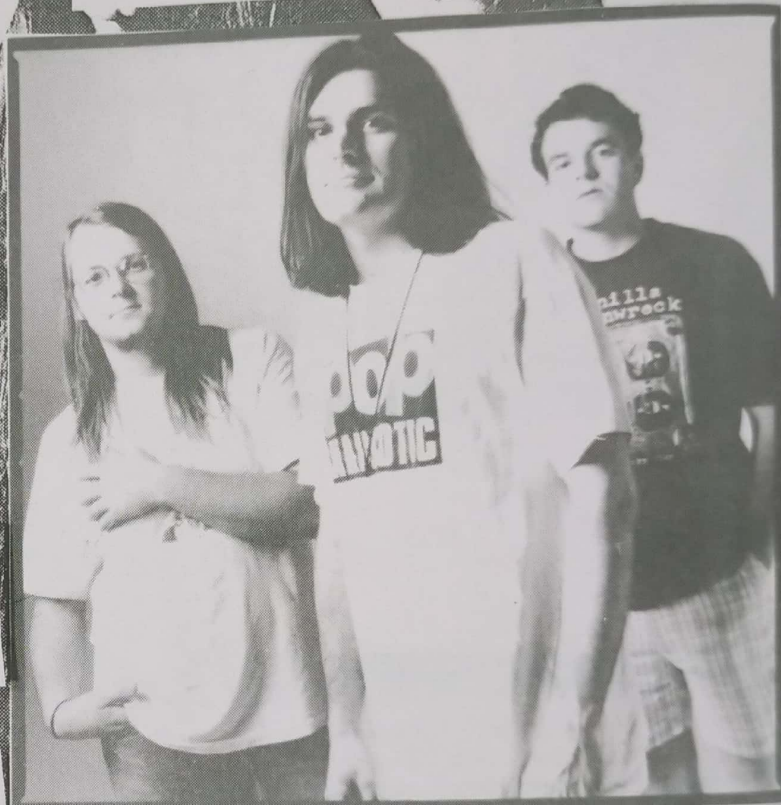
It's hard to tell if there are genuinely people out there who like this stuff, but if there are, there's plenty of it about.

Neurosis - Pain Of Mind LP (Alternative Tentacles) *

I'm often amazed at the records people choose to re-issue.

Medicine - Time Baby 3 single (Beggars Banquet) *

A wah trip made bearable-only by Elizabeth Fraser's presence.



Baby Chaos - Sperm single (EastWest) *

A pathetic attempt at copying the current indie genre.

Helmet - Betty LP (Atlantic) ***

Prong - Snap Your Fingers single (Epic) ***

These two are okay as metal bands go.

Bang Bang Machine - Eternal Happiness LP (Ultimate) ****

"Five years in the making" it says. As such it would be a justifiable achievement, but although the last couple of singles are on here ('Give You Anything', 'Technologica'), the songs which first brought them out blinking into the daylight ('The Geek EP') are not here. It's BBM's reluctance to keep up that keeps them fresh. I think I may be a little too easily taken in by three keyboard dancepop musos and a kookie singer. They could be Eighth Wonder.

Mambo Taxi - In Love With LP (Clawfist) ***

The novelty's worn off. Recording an album is the musical equivalent of getting married and settling down, which doesn't suit their one-tune songs of Just Seventeen simplicity.

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HEAVENLY

Reverent Horton Heat - Liquor In The Front LP (Atlantic) *
Psyclone Rangers - Feel Nice LP (World Domination) *
If I ever have to see Rev or Gallon Drunk again I'll scream.

Sky Cries Mary - A Return To The Inner Experience LP (World Domination) *
A slight improvement on Senser.

Unsane - Total Destruction LP (City Slang) ***
College kids making a nice noise.

1-5 Killers Vol 3 compilation LP (Schizophonic) *
Mostly metallers from the Pacific Northwest. I wish I was on the radio and then I could echo Peel's words and say these songs are not killers, until you get to this... Cue Kaia. Except he used a different track, and it wasn't Ice-Cream Headache, but it could have been.

Ligament - Pumping Heart single (Flower Shop) ***
A subdued version of someone like Compulsion. On Robin God Machine's label.

Slipstream - Sundown single (Ché) ***
18th Dye - Dive single (Ché) ****
A couple of brooders. 18th Dye are the louder of the pair. They're also the ones with the tune and the build.

Bandit Queen - Queen Bee single (Playtime) ****
CuckooLand - Winter single (Damaged Goods) ****
When you look back in a couple of years, you'll kick yourself if you missed out on BQ just because they're not from London and in the papers every week. It's good that they're not, but don't let it bother you. Another John Robb production, but the album will be done by indie pop disco hit maker Pat Collier.

CuckooLand have already got such a hit on their hands with this epic career start. Both sides deserve the SOTW they have already earned in all the important places. "Don't let them tell you what to think" the song goes. You don't have to listen to me when all this political correctness is available right here in audio form.

Bunty Chunks - Muck For Skin Heads single (Noiseburger) ****
Some hippy girl exercising her vocal range in a punk operatic style. Send £2.50 to PO Box 6355, London, W15 6PD. Send another pound for a big compilation tape. Also home to Beware The Cat fanzine.

Catchers - Shifting single (Setanta) ***
Prefab Sprout. That's who they sound like. Coleraine folk now slumming it in London. This plus the last single are on the CD of this. £2 per 7" from 130 London Road, London, SE1 6LF.

Divine Comedy - Drinking Song single (Setanta) **
Nice musical (as in Rogers & Hammerstein) collection.

Rancho Diablo - One & A Half / Two & A Half single (13th Hour/Mute) ***
They manage to make quite a decent industrial with a hint of reggae on record, despite sounding like industrial waste on a stage.

Lighthouse - Sad Line single (Waaaaaaaah! Singles Club) **
It's not about the Northern line because they're French. Excessively enunciated dreariness.

Picnic - Plug single (Waaaaaaaah! Singles Club) ***
Someone give these guys a sandwich.

Beastie Boys - Get It Together single (Grand Royal/Capitol/Parlophone) **
Surface noise abounds on this slightly wacky but not funny sidestep around the original early 80s basement scratchers.

Shampoo - Trouble single (Food) *****
Doing it all wrong. A tale of failure to get a bus. Like the Beastie's return with a rap which is deliberately outside of rap's boundaries, except Shampoo slipped into rap merely because THEY'RE SO ANGRY that they have to shout. Cute to the point of campness.

Shampoo You! fanzine
Maybe it was reading this on the eve of it's release that made me so receptive of 'Trouble'. Who can say? All I know is that those Shampoo girls are making a big noise in my head. A truly heroic passion that led to the writers of this rag to traipse all over the country to see Jacqui and Carrie at every gig they did (and a few they didn't) in the 'summer of Shampoo'. These fans went to Bristol and didn't seem too put out that Shampoo never made it, because it's just part of the martyrdom. They went to Vanessa Paradis and left very early. They went to Reading Festival and only saw one band and left. Much like the girls themselves, following them involves storming off down the pub afterwards. Some nice pictures, a few stolen quotes, some lyrics and a Shampoo diary. I don't know what it costs, but a cutesy letter or 50p will probably do it (+SAE of course) from Richard, Cutie Corner, 4 Shortlands Road, Kingston, Surrey, KT2 6HD. Shampoo are a new definition of cool.

Babydoll #1 fanzine
Dedicated entirely to Babes and Hole. Possibly lacking the excessive hero worship this level of dedication merits, this zine catalogues and comments mainly on the periphery of the two bands, describing the relationship along with a family tree. All well stuck together with telling song extracts. 50p + SAE from Siobhan, Spinney Meade West, Rockfield Rd, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0EJ.

Urban Dance Squad - Demagogue LP (Hut) **
I guess it's just me getting lazy with my comparisons, but everyone seems to sound like RATM these days.

18th Dye - Done LP (Ché) ****
I still like 'Whole Wide World', maybe because I'm a sucker for a pop song, but it helps lay the rug for the rest of the album. 18th Dye bring to mind some of the other post-MBV bands that I've taken a shine to - Whipped Cream and The Infant God immediately leap forward. On a recent trip here they supported Magic Hour, and it was a blissful night of fuzzy melodies. Just three people covering the full range of volume and tone with a perfect application of the same beaten up bass/gtr/vox/drum that everyone else has. Whipped Cream looked up to Captain Beefheart - maybe these do too, I dunno. To end, 'Girls Boots' sums up all the greatness of the preceding 30 minutes, and the preceding 20 years. And the packaging is rather lovely.

Velocity Girl - Can't Stop Smiling single (Sub Pop) ****
And as if that wasn't enough, here comes another five people with sweet tunes over a solid rhythm base.

Mekons - Retreat From Memphis LP (Quarterstick) ***
Drifting everywhere between Chumbawamba and The Beastie Boys. The Mekons sound like they're probably big in Europe, which would exclude them from a career in this country.

Girls Against Boys - Sexy Sam single (Touch And Go) ***
Just in case you're not overly familiar with GVS's stuff, the CD of this single contains samplers from the few records before, but fans will buy the 7 inch because it's just the two new songs. They sound like a rock Fall.

TeenBeat 50 compilation LP (TeenBeat/Matador) *
Some songs which were cute when they were collectable.

William S Burroughs and Kurt Cobain - The Priest They Called Him (T/K) ***
Little more than a posthumous oddity. I didn't really follow the story, but Kurt's guitar seems to wail along on the right track. (Recorded late 1992, released just before Kurt's death).

Timeshard - Crystal Oscillations LP (Planet Dog/Ulimate) ***
Eat Static - Implant LP (Planet Dog/Ulimate) ***

It's at times like these that you appreciate a bit of straightforward psychedelic bing bong dancey music (see following reviews).

A House - Why Me? single (Setanta/EMI) **
Pulp meets Ivor Cutler/Deacon Blue.

Rev. Horton Heat/Supersuckers - Caliente/400 Bucks split single (Sub Pop) *
Supersuckers are quite bearable in a small dose.

Sunny Day Real Estate - Diary LP (Sub Pop) **
A nice Dali-esque inlay booklet. Or is it the Weebles?

Drive Like Jehu - Yank Crime LP (Elemental) ***
The band that led Trumans Water along the way, this album is most notable for including 'Sinews', which the aforementioned fellow San Diegans tried to imitate on '10 X My Age'. That's all you need to know.

8 Storey Window - LP (Ultimate) ****
Levering themselves out of the 'just another Camden grunge band' slot with comparative ease. Welcome to the next generation.

God - Anatomy Of Addiction LP (Big Cat) **
Unconventional, shouting, whirring noise historians.

Philistines Jr - The Continuing Struggle Of mini-LP (Tarquin) ***
Cheery, loveable Americans, somewhere between Blueboy and The Family Cat.

Black Train Jack - You're Not Alone LP (Roadrunner) **
Another band stuck with their followers in the Bad Religion/Ramones/Al punk/metal rut.

World Of Leather - Silver single (Soundcakes) **
Sulphur - Highchair single (Rhythm King) **
Strangelove - Time For The Rest Of Your Life single (Food) **
Passion Fruit And Holy Bread - Crush single (Splendid) *
Subjagger - I Am single (Lemon) *

The Evening Session was an essential piece of listening when it started, but these days you have to listen in smaller doses otherwise you begin to realise everything sounds like this.

Lush - Hypocrite single (4AD) ****
Lush - Desire Lines single (4AD) ****
Lush - Split LP (4AD) ****

I feel as if I'm selling out by liking Lush all of a sudden. 'Hypocrite' is an amazing 3 minute pop song that crosses the boundary between Velocity Girl and the top 10. This one song alone is enough for me to like Lush whether or not I like any of the other stuff, but I do like that as well. The words are basically a slightly twisted way of saying we're all as bad as each other. You may think it's a bit of a cynical marketing move to release two singles and an album at the same time, but there's certainly no attempt at a rip-off. Both singles are over 20 minutes, with two songs not on the album, one remixed from the album, and the title track. The longest track, 'Undertow', is a brilliant dub/dance mix of the album version. 'Desire Lines' keeps the same format, but is a longer, thoughtful brood rather than a pop sensation. The album is kind of wishy-washy, but in a strong kind of way (apart from 'When I Die' which suffers a Cranberries influence). I'll be happy to see it in the top part of the end of year polls. On record, as well as on stage, Lush have stood by their indie beliefs of not moving more than they need to, but still some. I'm taken aback. Lush are good.

Peach - Giving Birth To A Stone LP (Mad Minute) ****
Lest we forget the glorious achievements of an unpretentious band in the laid back metal pond, along comes a pepped up reminded of a couple of singles plus the rest of an albums worth of moody romps.

Noiseaddict - Young & Jaded EP (Wiiija) ***
Wearing their influences on their T-shirts, this bunch of school surfers seem to have spent about 20 minutes recording this record, but it still has a great charm despite it's repeated airplay and it's adoration of Sir Evan.

AC Acoustics - Able Treasury LP (Elemental) **
A swirling moodswing you might easily lose yourself in.

Prolapse - Pull Through Barker single (Cherry Red) ****
Tse Tse Fly - Scaffolding single (Cherry Red) **
I think I prefer Prolapse to sound like they really do, not this cleaned up hit potential. I still love it though. Prolapse are the Sonny and Cher of indie. Tse Tse Fly were always just slightly below a really good noise band, but now they've got a mellower feel and some songs.

Wasp Factory - Just Because single (Ella) *
They seem to have learnt this muso punk from TV series background bands.

Jale - 14 08 93 single (Sub Pop) ***
If Courtney Love calls them "the Sloan spin-off chick band" I'm not sure if that's a recommendation or not. If you liked the last single ('Promise') it doesn't mean you're going to like this.

Gary Young - Hospital For The Chemically Insane LP (Big Cat) *
A rare opportunity for me to review an album aeons before it's release date, and I can tell you not to buy it. (Is this the ex-Pavement drummer? - it doesn't say).

Maitreya - demos ***
I just caught a bit of Donnington on the radio, and up to Pantera this lot are nothing, but compared to Extreme they're gods.

Chumbawamba - Anarchy LP (One Little Indian) ****
Another band that sounds like the Chumbas, except they do it so much better. Starts with the full length versions of the top notch pop hits. They are to Carter what Spitboy are to Bikini Kill - work that one out! Anarchy in the discoteques.

Tsunami - The Heart's Tremolo LP (Simple Machines) ***
I'm going to be very patronising now. They should stick to running the record label. There's obviously enough good stuff to keep them busy. As far as being people from a label being in a band goes, they're not bad, but I think their priorities should be that way round. I did warn you!

Miranda Sex Garden - Fairytales Of Slavery LP (Mute) *
Back to their old selves after a quick burst of dance beats on the single.

Bang Bang Machine - Give You Anything single (Ultimate) ****
I picked this up thinking it would follow on nicely from MSG, but in fact this is a top pop tune. Not a follow-up to 'Geek', more like the next step. I think this is what all those Salads and Blessed Ethels are trying to do. I bet this is rocking the discos in Evesham tonight. Get down there.

Smut - Blood Smut And Tears LP (Spanish Fly) ***
For someone wearing a "metal rules" guitar strap, this borders on the (predictable) Babes/Scrawl crossover. Not much of a tune, but it probably benefits from volume.

Yo La Tengo - From A Motel 6 single (Matador) ***
Shams - Sedusia single (Matador) ****
Portastatic - Naked Pilseners single (Matador) ***
A dozy buzz, a sweet mantra and a simple duet ballad.

Ripe - The Plastic Hassle LP (Beggars Banquet) *
The CD booklet has a strange appeal. It's crap camera snaps of the boys in a filling station, plus a few security camera pics. The music's 70s epic rubbish (Pink Floyd or someone).

Sulphur - 2CV single (Transglobal/Rhythm King) ***
Catchy indie guitar pop (see also Gene and other Evening Session faves).

Hurricane/DFL - America's Most Hardcore split LP (Grand Royal/Wiiiija) ***
I'd debate the "most" tag. White boy rap.

Sharkboy - Matinee LP (Nude) ***
A minor smoky classic. Maybe not. With a bit more orchestration they could be Everything But The Girl.

Uptown Horns - Uptown Horns Revue LP (Collectors Pipeline) ****
Blues brass section to the stars. "Modern" stars, it says here - 'Living In America', 'Love Shack', 'I Hate Myself For Loving You'. That was them. They've even worked with Cyndi Lauper. Surprisingly, I could get into this. (And it's not an instrumental). From a label dedicated to keeping history alive. 117 Engineers Drive, Hicksville, NY 11801, USA. Fax 1 516 932 0721.

Linus - Super Golgotha Crucifixion Scene single (Elemental) ***

Linus - Yougli LP (Elemental) **
I'd like to say something negative, but I don't really mean it.

MIRV - Cosmodrome LP (Mammoth) ***
The press release definitely helps here. Without it you'd think this is just a disjointed ramble about nothing. The sleeve makes sense though - a surreal ticket to a life as a movie. Remember: Ween were strange too.



Colour Noise - Paint My Face single (Lowspeak) ***
What? Die Cheerleader meets Daisy Chainsaw meets Bleach. Could do better.

Fledgling - youwannamakeacakeyougottabreaksomeeggs EP (Gecko) ***
L7 meets Madder Rose meets Tsunami. Ooo-er. Could do better.

Cooper demo ****
Wow! This takes me back. This could be The Sainsburys or Nine Steps To Ugly. Strawberry Story are still going aren't they? Here's another one.

Cibola demo *****
It's about time someone from this side of the Atlantic got the hang of the noise those guitars are supposed to make. This is awash with guitars, and the singer blows over like a spaced out (but likeable) Billy Corgan. Phone 071 700 6125 and ask for a copy.

A House - Wide Eyed And Ignorant LP (Setanta) ***
Quirky rock'n'roll, probably revelling in the success of Pulp and Chumbas.

We Are Icerink compilation (Icerink) ***
While St Etienne are safely smooching up the charts, this is the slightly more offbeat stuff they'd quite like to be doing instead. Sweet but not very notable.

Raw Novembre - Disturbed LP (Aggressive) ***
Maybe in Mullingar this is unbearably unpleasant, but they compare favourably to fellow countryfolk Pet Lamb (or the better known Therapy?)

Emperor Julian - Disco Gene EP (PIAO) *****
Fast, fuzzed noise pop. The guitars sing and the guy sings like a guitar. I think you'll be hearing more from this lot. Slightly reminiscent of Huggy when Chris used to sing, with some of the tune and arrogant vocal style of Blur. From BM Nancee, London, WC1N 3XX.

Strangelove - Time For The Rest Of Your Life single (Food) *
I don't like them for the same reasons I don't like Pearl Jam (does anyone?)

Sleeper - Delicious single (Indolent) *****
Gorgeous. Uplifting. Happy. Exciting. Dangerous.

Downset- EP (Abstract Sounds) ***
Another RATM clone.

Flinch - Ordinary single (Dental) *****
Keep watching this space folks. Flinch get better by the minute.

18th Dye - Whole Wide World single (Ché) ****
I don't care what anyone says, this is one of their best songs. Okay, so I haven't heard the album yet, but this slice of motorbiking guitar/bass racing hits my sidewalk.

Fuzzy - Flashlight single (Seed) ****
Ivy - Get Enough single (Seed) ****
I heard Fuzzy on the radio and I thought it must be a Washington band, probably Velocity Girl. Critique fails me. Cutesy NV girlpop.

Blessed Ethel - 2 Minute Mind (2 Damn Loud) *
Puppy plop.

Catchers - Cotton Dress single (Setanta) ***
A smart single. Not at all like The Cranberries. More like Scrawl, Tsunami and that ilk. Until I can put my finger on who it really sounds like. (Felt?)

ROADRUNNER

DIE MONSTER DIE

Swell - 41 LP (Def America/Beggars Banquet) ***
Ace booklet that comes with this. You folks are missing out. The booklet suggests life beyond music. Which is fortunate. A pleasant way to relax in the Californian sunshine. I guess.

Vanilla Trainwreck - Five Songs From Mordecai EP (Mammoth) ***
Good wholesome American country dwellers.

Thrum - So Glad single (Delmore) ****

Mary Janes - Telescope single (Delmore) ****

The resemblance of Thrum to Maria McKee is uncanny. They're from Scotland, so maybe they share a flat with Texas. The same could be said of The Mary Janes, except they're from Indianapolis. PO Box 477458, Chicago, Illinois, 60647-7458, USA.

Fig Dish - Nimble single (Liquid Meat) **

From Chicago. PO Box 460692, Escondido, CA 92046, USA. I liked the address.

Creature Did - Flirtatious Negative Headjive single (Mudd) **

China Pig - Aurel single (Mudd) **

Slightly HM guitars, a harmonica, and a grunge pop voice. Both. PO Box 814, Brookfield, CT 06804, USA.

Monsterland - At One With Time single (Seed) ****

A chance to catch up with some of the better kept secrets from Monsterland's back-catalogue. A questionable service. But a good single.

Madder Rose - Panic On LP/single (Seed/Atlantic/WEA/EastWest) *****

I bought a poster of Louise Brooks at the weekend. I'm looking at it now. She was in movies in the 20s. She's dead now. Her film career was cut short first by her rejection of Hollywood, then by the arrival of sound. 60 years on she's more than just a silent actress. Madder Rose are more than just a band. When your grandchildren inherit the crumbled pieces of your CDs and your Madder Rose records they'll think everything seemed better in the past. This is now.

The single which preceded the album includes the title track along with a couple of minimalistic outtakes.

Thinking Fellas Union Local 282 - Hurricane single (Matador) ***

This probably sounds like Neil Young or someone, if I only knew.

Smack Melon - Spaceshot single (Mad Minute) ***

From Boston. That's home to Evan and his pals, kids. So where's he been while this is going on? 'I'm Not Cool' brings Monsterland to mind. Wa hey.

Loud Family - Slouching Towards Liverpool LP (Alias) ***

Small 23 - Free T-Shirts For Spain single (Alias) **

A radio-friendly shuffle in the direction of the North West.

Easy - Listen To The Bells single (Snap) ***

With a bit of help from some remixers Easy have dipped their toes in the faceless disco oceans.

Spinner Dolphins - Spinner EP (Tubby Smollet) ****

Strangely infectious drum machine/keyboards sounds with a wavering boy, voice holding it all together. A chirpy set of choons. Write: Pete, 17 Devonshire Avenue, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants, PO4 9EA.

Free Kitten - Unboxed LP (Wiiija) ****

I heard the X-Ray Spex original of 'Oh Bondage Up Yours' today, and nobody - not Kim Gordon or flaming Blubber can get close. But the rest is well worth buying. You may even have thought so at import single prices.

Codeine - The White Birch LP (Sub Pop) ***

I know it's supposed to go at 33, but I listened at 45. Philistine.

Whiteout - No Time single (Silvertone) *****

Whiteout - Starrclub single (Silvertone) *****

What a debut. Three top pop tunes from the polo-neck era. Make that six.

Unrest - Fuck Pussy Galore (And All Her Friends) LP (Teen Beat/Matador) ***

Collectable oddities. I'm sure if I listened all the way through I'd find something I really liked.

Earthmen - Teen Sensations LP (Seed) ****

Noisy indie pop kids.

Nailbomb - Point Blank LP (Roadrunner) ****

Him outta Sepultura and him outta Fudge Tunnel getting together for a laugh. Needless to say there's not much mirth apparent. A serious headbanger.

Understand - Bored Games single () *

What they'd give to sound like Sepultura.

Baby Chaos - Golden Tooth single (EastWest) **

Much the same as Blessed Ethel/Salad really.



Submerge issue 7 fanzine

Now I know what it's like to look through thousands of reviews, although the various contributors seem to reaffirm my opinions. An interview and flower-drawing with The Muffs, Smashing Pumpkins not being too obnoxious at a press conference, fanzine reviews, demo reviews, a worshipful bit explaining why The Lemonheads are the nerest thing to (H)Evan, album reviews, a takeover of a Gumball press conference, live reviews, more album reviews, Cop Shoot Cop explaining the advantages of daytime ("sometimes you have to cash a cheque and buy food"), more album reviews, Redd Kross predicting the NWONW, single reviews, Radiohead living up to the title of their hit, more single reviews, The Posies being quizzed on their Dom Fleming connections, a bit of Revolver, EP reviews, festival reviews, and a 7 inch single with Gumball, Stewed, Thee Headcoats and Love Sick. I don't think I've missed anything, and nor have they. All for the moderate shelling out of £2+SAE, 35 Lickey House, North End Road, London, W14 9UQ.

Daisy Chainsaw - Future Free single (One Little Indian) ****

Sounding almost as good as it did 4 years ago with a different singer. 4 good years. 4 good songs.

19 W 21 STREET SUITE 501

Die Monster Die - Withdrawal Method LP (Roadrunner) *****

Die Monster Die - Swallowed single (Roadrunner) *****

:12' Cute NY metal.

'877

Carter USM - Starry Eyed And Bollock Naked LP (Chrysalis) ***
Yeah, right.

TRUCKS BUILD JOHN FALLS

Die Krupps - II The Final Option LP (Atlas/Rough Trade Germany) **

Low budget Euro metal electro. I always bring up KMFDM/Young Gods, but this lot aren't up to the mark.

Helium - Pirate Prude LP (Matador) ****

Having more than just a Sassy cute band alert in common with That Dog.

Lisa Germano - Happiness LP (4AD) ***

Full of the polite pop rebellion you expect these days.

Magnetic Fields - Holiday LP (Feel Good All Over) ****

Imagine the Christmas cheer of '100,000 Fireflies', and then remove Susan Anway's pixie voice and you're left with Stephin Merritt's Playschool tinkering with cheap electronic sounds with a low-fi warmth and an experimentalist charm. Very early 80s, but not. Every song a hit.

Trains & Boats & Planes - Minimal Star LP (Shimmy Disc or Cloudland) ****

Danish "highbrow pop". Ha ha. No, you have to laugh, but they do appear to have studied the art of perfection. A bit Sarah-y (maybe).

Breed - Wonderful Blade single (Clawfist) ***

Bivouac - Marked And Tagged single (Elemental) **

Wow, a couple of bands with a connection with the north who weren't produced by John Robb! That's a rarity.

Bandit Queen - Scorch single (Playtime) ****

Putting some effort into those vocal strains. Loud guitars and noisy guitars with a bit of thought. It's probably a mixed blessing that they're not part of the NWNW.

Jeff Buckley - Live At Sin-e LP (Big Cat) ***

I don't go much on singer-songwriters, or folk music, but at least this guy can sing.

Miranda Sex Garden - Peep Show single (Mute) **

Operatic buskers with rented industrial backing.

Walkabouts - Good Luck Morning single (Sub Pop) ***

I seem to be liking them more these days, and this single is only a reminder of their existence.

Sleeper - Swallow single (Indolent) ****

Less to say than Echobelly, but the best of the lot.

Trumans Water - God Speed The Punchline LP (Elemental) *

Pavement - Crooked Rain Crooked Rain LP (Big Cat) *

If I swapped the CDs over I wonder how many people in Record & Tape would notice.

Bettie Serveert - Palomine single (Beggars Banquet) ***

Having moved into the office nextdoor, they've decided to release the same song again. Nuff said?

DQE - But Me, I Fell Down LP (Feel Good All Over/Cargo) ****

It's unfortunate that the best song on here is an interpretation of a Breeders song. It's also a shame this is so short when the press release goes on about the vast quantity of material they recorded for this album. But anyway this is a cool concentration of Grace and Chris's weird version of pop. Nearest milestones: Tsunami, Sidi Bou Said.

Lotion - Tear single (Kokopop) **

Lotion - Full Isaac LP (Big Cat) **

If I hadn't heard of them I wouldn't have bothered mentioning them.

Star Pimp - Seraphim 280Z LP (Tupelo) **

Picasso Trigger - Fire In The Hole LP (Alias) ***

They're cute punks and all that, but can't play for shit.

Lois - Strumpet LP (K) ****

Not as good as the last one. Less humour.

Eggs - Teenbeat 96 Exploder LP (Teenbeat) ***

Unlimited studio time up Arlington way. Not as wanky as it might have been.

Slant 6 - Soda Pop Rip Off LP (Dischord) ***

In retrospect, wasn't riot grrrl just an excuse to do wimpy punk?

Crunt - Crunt LP (Trance) *

Dog poo. Plus a few bits that sound like John Spencer.

Chune - Burnt LP (Headhunter/Cargo) ****

So what is it that makes something that might get cast as HM sound okay? Is it just because it's American? At this stage of the reviewing process I'm only picking out about 1 in 3, and this is a great among a load of basically similar stuff.

TC Hug - Find single (Playtime) **

I think standards are slipping such that stuff like this becomes acceptable as a catchy pop tune.

Headswim - Tense Nervous Head single (Sony) *

Headswim - Moment Of Union single (Sony) *

These major label metal things have a habit of becoming big somewhere. Without my knowledge hopefully.

Throneberry - Sangria LP (Alias) ***

I was quite amazed to find this starting with a song I've heard and liked. That's two from Alias now. There's a big Afghan Whigs influence here, and I think I like them in the same way I like the Whigs. I'll listen to it later.

Cornershop - Born Disco Died Heavy Metal single (Wiiija) ****

I can't see what all the fuss is about. They are good.

Tribute To Nothing - 24 Hours single (Kingleake) ****

I had a TTN review intended for #8, but it got lost somewhere. I saw them once and thought they were a brilliant band who seemed to have been influenced by Kerrang HM, but made it acceptable. Oh, and they're only 15ish.

Ash - Jack Names The Planets single (La La Land) ***

More nippers with an excellent single. And a crap B-side.

Sidi Bou Said - Thing single (Ultimate) ****

The Sidi's thing this time round seems to be an emphasis on recycling. And if you know them you'll probably know what the next sentence is going to be, but it's not true in this instance.

Archers Of Loaf - What Did You Expect single (Alias) ***

For about 3 minutes 19 there I quite liked AoFL. Even though they sounded like Pavement/Trumans Water.

Come - The Wrong Side single (Beggars Banquet) **

Uzi - Sleep Asylum EP (Beggars Banquet) ***

I guess it must be hard to be measured according to your fucked-up-ness. Our Thalia is probably more fucked up than some of her contemporaries but less able to portray it. Uzi is her band of 1985, and it's pretty good.

Buffalo Tom - I'm Allowed single (Beggars Banquet) ***
I've really got nothing new to say about Buffalo Tom.

Tad - Leafy Incline single (WEA) ****
They seem to be less theatrical about their "Seattle grunge" sound.

Blur - Parklife LP (Food) ****
They keep knocking out those albums. They've kept taking the pop pills.

XC-NN - LP (Rhythm King) *

XC-NN - 1000 Easy single (Transglobal) **

As pop attempts go, this is at least a little dangerous. Like Ace Of Base though - you hear a single and then are disappointed that that's the only song on the album worth anything.

Xerox Heaven fanzine #1

This fanzine gives frank and fair reviews of over 400 fanzines of every kind (except football). There are also interviews with a few zine writers (including me!). If you can't be bothered with fanzines because most of them are crap, buy this to help you choose. Only 80p + an SAE big enough to take the weight from Roy Delaney, 22 Kingswick Drive, Sunninghill Drive, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7BQ.

Hero Worship fanzine #2

In my interview in the above I said I like fanzines like my own, and this is a fanzine that seems to share my taste, so I like it. Good interviews with Sidi Bou Said, Voodoo Queens, Tiny Monroe and Tsunami. Not that I'm over-enamoured with those particular bands, but the theme is there, and the reviews and the references come closer. 50p + A5 SAE to 732 Bradford Road, Oakenshaw, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD12 7DY.

Luna - Bewitched LP (Elektra) ****

I can't work out if this is good or bad. Maybe this major vs indie nonsense is just nonsense. Either Elektra have lost their sense of judgement they've gained some taste despite, I assume very little commercial appeal. A lovely little mope. Another Warner winner. How very indie.

Red Red Meat - Jimmywine Majestic LP (Sub Pop) **

A bit of a reminder of Sub Pop past, but this lot claim a blues influences, which is as good an excuse as any for not totally rocking out. A couple of good songs.

Ivy - Get Enough single (Seed) ****
More NY whimsical girlie stuff.

Wellspeak - Swoop demo ****
Your regular Chilli Peppers/RATM stuff.

Gene - For The Dead single (Costermonger) ***

There was a fraction of a second that sounded exactly like Mozzer, but then it got into a James-ish singalong.

Tiger Trap - Sour Grass EP (K) ****

Lacking some of the instant classics of earlier releases, this CD still contains some essential moments of frantic West coast sunshiney C86 indie pop.

SF Seals - Baseball Trilogy single (Matador) *****

Why don't we have baseball over here? If we had tributes like this instead of all that 'Ingerland' rubbish maybe football could gain some credibility.

Holly Golightly - Happy single (Kix) ***

Helium fuelled jolly silliness from Germany. I assume it's supposed to go at 45 - it sounds rather dull at 33.

Fabric - Dislocations single (Whole Car/Wilija) *****

I daren't mention Therapy?, but Fabric are going somewhere on the power front.

Die Monster Die - Slumber single (Roadrunner) ****

NY hard rock, with a Juliana H type singer, which makes a pleasant change. They were once on Funky Mushroom, and there is a Moog presence.

Peru/Mary Queen Of Scots - split single (Waaaaaah! singles club) *****

Gosh! It's that wimpy stuff again. Just when you thought Sarah had done it's stuff, along comes some guy wallowing in self pity that sounds almost listenable. But how many Field Mice are present? £5 for 5 releases or £1.50 each. 4 Shortlands Road, Kingston, Surrey, KT2 6HD. (PS. Peru let the side down, but it's only one side that you could do without).

AC Acoustics - Sweatlodge single (Elemental) ***

Doing what Glaswegians do best: making a noise that can be distinguished from American noise by the low 'rock' content, and distinguished from English noise by the low 'American' content.

Chill E.B. - Born Suspicious EP (Alternative Tentacles) ****

All round good egg, Chill has won awards for his contribution to society, and yet still writes a mean rhyme. You've probably heard 'Menace To Society', which is one among many great rap toons on this most excellent record. Then you've got 'Censorship Of The Arts' which almost reaches the Orb chill-out zone. Positivity without preaching.

Buck Pets - To The Quick LP (Restless) **

Remind me somehow of Band Of Susans. No reason.

Mindgrinder - This Old Head single (AcEdEliCa) **

Mindgrinder - Due What You Willt EP (AcEdEliCa) *

They suggest you play the B-side of the single at 33, which makes quite an impressive death metal start, until the vocals kick in, at which time you flip to 45 and get a dated kinda rock thing. The EP just made a rattling noise and showed 'E' on my CD player. The press quotes didn't say anything exciting though.

Barbara Lien - Let The Reverb Answer LP (Imp) ****

Lots of people get compared to Mazzy Star because they were a good band that people remember. In retrospect, most of them seem to have a more substantial talent than Mazzy. Barbara Lien is in solo acoustic mode for this LP, purely for the current lack of band, so basically her voice and songs are standing up to fend for themselves, and doing a damn sight better than Mazzy's distant moment of perfected wonder. \$3 from Imp, PO Box 34, Portland, OR, USA, or from K.

Divine Comedy - Promenade LP (Setanta) **

Jolly nice. Sounds like one of those Creation poets of yore.

Electric Boys - Freewheelin LP (Polygram) **

Swedish heavy metal might not sound like your mug of cocoa, but it's alright as these things go.

Inspiral Carpets - Devil Hopping (Mute) **

It concerns me slightly that this is the second Inspirals album I've quite liked.

Sharkboy - Matinee LP (Nude) ***

Sharkboy - Razor single (Nude) ***

Well, that wasn't so bad. Seems like they're being tough by being wimps.

Thieves - Either single (Hut) ***

If this hits that big-time soul pop ballad status I think I'll soon tire of it, but just this once is fine.

HELIUM

DUBLIN CASTLE 11 JULY 94

Helium are like an older That Dog. The two nice girls up front spew out cutesy vocals and noisy guitars with minimum effort and maximum amplification producing that powerful lazy sound that us dreamers love so much. Singer Mary could have chosen to be a riot grrrl but she's too pretty for that. She's dressed entirely in black from her clumpy shoes up to her pigtails, and her studied glances around the room have the strange haunt of a serial killer. Between songs she gulps from a pint of lager, whilst her sidekick sips a familiar small bottle of Bud. The bassist looks like the Baywatch or 90210 idea of a lawyer, and her only concession to the macabre is the black finger nails and the DMs.

Meanwhile the guitar and bass continue on their stop-start way, turned up so loud that a slight ripple with the cigarette-clasping finger produces a devastating singular effect, but the usual full-on stroke blasts out a wall of noise that carries the vocals in the same manner. The songs? Oh, they're about vampires. They float effortlessly in and catch you sleeping.

CUCKOOLAND + XEROX GIRLS
ALDERSHOT WEST END CENTRE

You can tell as soon as Xerox Girls walk on stage that they've got something special to offer. Obviously the singer, the only possible contender for fitting the description of the band monicker, brings to mind bright beacons of the past such as Queen Courtney with the white rag dress, or Katie Chainsaw with the scruffy hair and black lipstick. I expect the necktie is a more accurate reflection of their true direction, as modelled in the past by some old punks. To her left is the skimpily atired guitarist in his blue shorts and thick woolly socks. On the opposing side is the bassist who keeps the cool, standing pretty much still in her full length black dress like Michelle Babe. At the back is Mr Metal with the long hair and short trousers, but like the rest of the team, he is bashing out the rhythms of straightforward punk of the ever-durable kind.

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Only once do they slow the pace down to just a bass line as the whole room shakes to the deep momentum. "What was the point of that?" asks the guitarist, who is by now down to just the shorts, when everyone looks confused where they had previously been clapping and cheering. "We won't be doing any more 7 minute instrumentals". It's then a return to form with another crowd-pleasing fast punk song with the singer bobbing up and down as if she's looking for the weak spot on the stage floor.

"We're finishing in a couple of minutes and we want you to take something away with you from this gig," says the scantily clad guitarist, as he reaches for a bag of sliced bread which he throws out to the pigeons. The band leave. "What a crap ending," he steps back to remark to the puzzled punters. "I bet Killing Joke never did that".

The audience are now fired up on punk from the Xerox Girls and from the UK Subs disco outside, so Cuckooland's entrance is greeted with calls for more of the same. "Later," says Coral announcing the current single, 'Winter', as a dance song. Punk does follow, but of the pop variety as represented on the singles. Perhaps tonight is against them, with the crowd screaming for hard punk, and the band's ferocious efforts resulting in a stream of broken guitar strings. The dancers out front are half satisfied with the power punk, but the Thames Valley twin vocal dancers on stage seem to be enjoying themselves more, leaping around as if it's their favourite band up there. A range of styles are represented, but maybe 'I Feel Fine' has acquired more of a reggae beat than normal because of the bass making up for the failed guitar. All in all, a good idea of what to expect next time.

matador

extended play

yo la tengo

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CD5

portastatic

"NAKED PILSENER"
7" / CD5

the shams

"SEDUSIA"
7" / CD5

sf seals

(w/Barbara Manning)
"STILL" 7"

blues explosion

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GOD IS MY CO-PILOT

God Is My Co-Pilot have released three albums in a year, along with about ten or so singles. They've got hundreds of songs, so many in fact that they were going to put a completely different set on the vinyl to the CD of 'Straight Not'. I never checked whether they did or not in the end. Craig writes most of the songs, which must be a maze of contradictions when he's a gay man writing songs for a lesbian to sing. It seems like everything he thinks about inspires a song. Like you're just walking along the street and thinking about people driving their cars, or whatever, and write down a few notes, which gets expanded to a one minute song. I would have difficulty in remembering how a particular song goes, or the name of a song they're playing, and so it seems amazing that they can immediately recall any song at will, despite the fact that the GodCo membership seems to vary hugely (around the central core of Craig and Sharon). This is may not sound like such a feat, but bear in mind the number of bands who've basically got one good song and a load of vaguely similar but forgettable ones. All GodCo are very distinct from each other, although maybe outsiders would disagree.

← FLY

All the records are excellent, but if you're unsure about which of the many products to spend your hard-earned cash on, I'd suggest 'Speed Yr Trip' as a good album to start on. Some of the singles have some of the best songs, but for £3.50 for four one minute songs, it's a bit of risk. For less money it's better. Try 'Gender Is As Gender Does' or 'On A Wing & A Prayer', or 'My Sinister Hidden Agenda' which contains the bit of an anthem 'Straight Not' (which is not on the almost disappointing album of the same name) along with four other fine songs. And of course they've got too many songs for the same one to reappear on a different record. There have been a couple of releases on the Rough Trade Shop related Soul Static Sounds label - the 'Sharon Quite Fancies Jo' EP, which includes their longest song, 'Loudmouth' - and 'How To Be' LP, which was their last release but contains some older stuff.

It was good to see them when they came over recently, if only to see who does what on the songs, especially which bits Fly sings on. They usually have two drummers. On this trip they had Siobhan (who looks miserable but probably isn't, especially since the rest of the entourage are cheerful to the extreme) and someone else with a bob haircut who looks like someone out of Bikini Kill (but isn't), but for the tiny Rough Trade shop gig they managed to squeeze Michael in too.

At the second home Sausage Machine gig, there were lots of song exchanges going on. GodCo revived 'Girly Loop' in a whole new way, a song Margaret wrote for Moonshake, including the line "she knows what god gave her eyelashes for". I actually preferred the GodCo interpretation, which was a new way of presenting Margaret's ever deep words. They also did a version of Skinned Teen's 'Secrets', who returned the compliment by doing 'Crushing A Girl'.

They seem to be openly personal in their songs, and they seem to have overcome difficulties of last year's trip, like where Craig was loath to play 'Home' when Sharon wanted to, so he suggested they play 'Anyone But You' to get back at her.

18TH DYE

+ EMPEROR JULIAN

RUSSELL ARMS

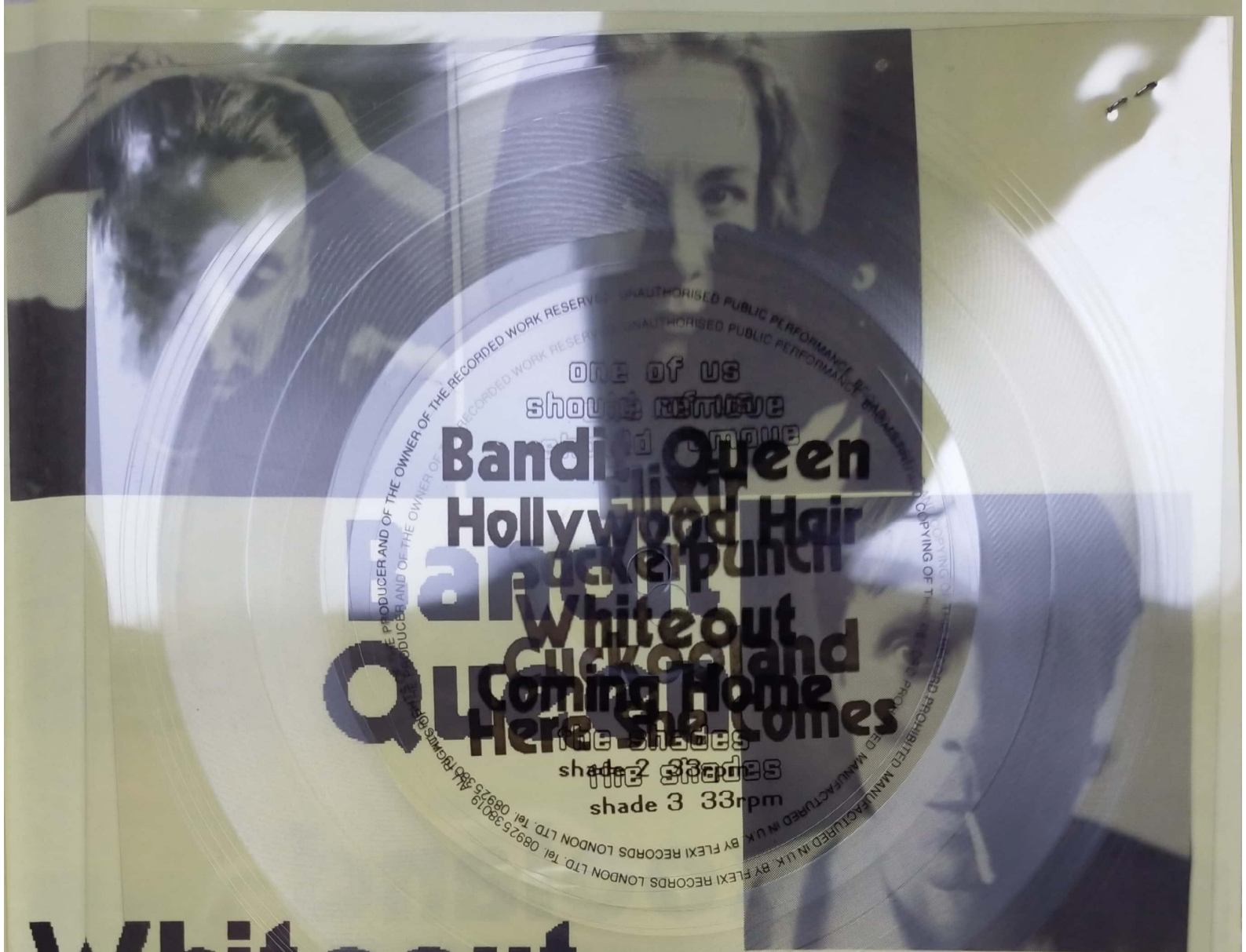
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Emperor Julian have this habit of starting and stopping suddenly. One minute they're just standing there. A second later it's full flow at full volume. The cry of 'Michael's Left' makes you want to ask in a loud voice "who's Michael?". Apparently they're angry that someone so loved should lose out to HIV. The potent concoction that mixes the ingredients of The Fall's half spoken half shouted wordstyle, Blur's taste for a tune, and maybe a little of the Wedding Present's frantic guitar attack will take them far. Seeing this guy explode into a microphone even manages to add a push over the power of the single. Whilst the story of the ever-distant vehicle in 'Driver Explained' leaves a certain reek of deja vu, the overwhelming remnant is a feeling that this band will soon become a familiar haunt.

To beat that is going to take some doing, but a mediocre middle band cools the atmosphere a little to set the stage for 18th Dye. This European collective beat down our resistance with a different world-destroying formula of noise and rhythm. Piet hammers out a relentless onslaught on the centre-stage drums. Heike performs a similar feat on bass, with occasional sidesteps to pull and scrape at the strings to see what kind of noise they can make. She also steps up to the microphone once in a while to back up Sebastian, or to take the lead in the summer mountain stroll of 'Dive'. Of course the vocal chords always play second fiddle to the strings, even when she's shouting into the four fat ones in 'Club Madame'. Piet offers his bottle of water to the audience, but they're having none if it, and neither is Sebastian with his deep dry voice which rides like an excitable Lou Reed over his own guitar. A noise innovation that has worn a violent groove in the bass amp, and can also gently caress heart strings in it's warm glow.

RECORDS

DIE MONSTER DIE



Whiteout





Elixir

Cuckooland

