

Records

The Celibate Rifles
Sideroxylon (Hot)

A bunch of Australian surf-punks with an appealing fix on the Saints. Ockers have always been good at this sort of thing and the Rifles are no exception. Fast (very), abrasive, utterly untrendy and hinting at an appropriate sloppiness without ever actually playing badly, they sound like they're getting out of it having a great time. They've a finely dumb sense of humour too — "Tried some surfing in the summer/Got skin cancer, what a bummer..." That said, this isn't quite a classic of the genre and singer Damien Lovelock isn't Chris Bailey but it's still fun. I have a nasty vision of myself getting weird and playing this at 3am, loud. RB

The Pale Fountains
Pacific Street (Virgin)

The Pale Fountains with this their debut album, initially appeal as Prefab Sprout soundalikes peddling pleasant, slightly twee acoustic tunes coloured by touches of orchestration (here brass, keyboards, flute and cello). But *Pacific Street* takes by stealth with subtle hooks and a clutch of strong songs bearing more than a faint resemblance to the work of bands like the Byrds. Recommended. DT

Sonny Terry

I Think I Got The Blues

(Interfusion)

Producer-guitarist Johnny Winter seems to have done for Sonny Terry what he did for Muddy Waters. In Winter's company Sonny kicks along in fine style. Gone is the torpor which so often has marred the records and performances of Terry with his long-time partner Brownie McGhee. Johnny is in

good voice and whoops and blows harp through a set of rollicking blues. KW

Jimmy Cliff

The Power and the Glory (CBS)
The first reggae record I ever bought was Desmond Dekker's 'Israelites' and the second was Jimmy Cliff's 'Vietnam'. That was a long time ago and apart from *Harder They Come*, Cliff hasn't done anything better. On his latest he seems to lack any sense of direction. Some tracks were mixed



Michael Head, Pale Fountains.

in the USA and the others at Channel One and Marley's Tuff Gong studio. It's the smoother and at times bland American sound that dominates the album, with tracks like 'American Dream' and 'We Are All One' sounding very MOR. This is no radical roots session, despite Cliff's exhortations to 'mash it' on 'Reggae Night'. One track stands above the rest — the

political 'Piece of the Pie', where he quotes Marley's 'Want More' and tries his hand at Eek A Mouse vocalising. But overall, this is a disappointing set. KB

The Cars

Heartbeat City (Elektra)

The 1984 model maybe, but it's off the same old assembly line. It still cruises along pleasantly enough but not for any great distance. And considering Ocacek's inefficient solo outing last year, it's not enough to simply suggest he needs a new vehicle. After all, he's handled both driving and navigating from the outset. So while the basic formula may remain serviceable, it's soon going to require major overhaul or the whole make will be obsolete. PT

Modern English

Ricochet Days (4 AD)

Thoroughly modern, thoroughly English; New Order leaves the clinic and meets the Psychedelic Furs. *Ricochet Days* features today's gadgetry without the excesses of robotic repetition, plus the guitar-bass-drums-keyboards quadrangle, vocals that echo Rep Butler (Furs) on occasion and the 80s wall of sound production. But it all begs the question, will it wear? As this year's model it's fine; easy to listen to and very competent, but it lacks the originality it needs to stand out from the crowd until 1999. DT

David Knopfler

Release (Polydor)

David Knopfler's bid to break away from the musical domination of younger brother Mark seems doomed by the fact that he sounds like an imitation of Dire Straits. Well, close enough that it becomes irksome. Even with brother Mark on rhythm guitar (David's old role in Dire Straits), this album fails to rise above the average. KW

The Clarke/Duke Project II (Epic)

The press blurb claims that Clarke and Duke's first *Project* was "one of 1981's best received albums." Horseshit! It was a pitiful exercise by two (sometimes) brilliant musicians condescending to an audience they didn't even have. This time out Stanley and George are more fired up, probably pissed off that Herbie Hancock, (another slumming jazzbo), beat them to the monster scratch-dance. Hence, although fully half the album is as flaccid as its predecessor, there's also some considerable improvement. Heroes' is an ultra-produced, hyper-paced workout that, given the breaks, could soon be street-blasting throughout the land. And two or three other tracks provide very active support, popping from the speakers with enough force for you to almost take the Project seriously. PT

Peter Green

Kolors (Powderworks)

Former Fleetwood Mac founder Green continues his retreat from reclusion with another album of straightforward, funky stuff. That eerily beautiful blues guitar is still there, but for some tastes this is too much like mates jamming pleasantly on a Sunday afternoon. On the other hand, to others that will be a key attraction. KW

Auckland Walk

Rhythmic Tendencies (WEA)

Jeff Clarkson

One To One (Toast)

Two releases from ex-members of Kiwi band Flight X-7, that go to show how (gulp) inoffensive most bad overseas acts are. Where Clarkson's catchy, if ultimately ingratiating, tunes almost save the edgy Judd-like vocals and bad lyrics, Auckland Walk down in a sour-cream whip of poor production, weak tunes and Carey Peterson's singing. *One To One* is proof of talent given too much rope, and *Tendencies* of Philip Schofield's plastic ears. File under or behind your Kiss collection. AR

Roy Buchanan

Best Of (Polydor)

Guitarist Roy Buchanan bears comparison with another virtuoso, the late Earl Hooker, regarded by

some as the best of the Chicago-based blues guitarists. Both were influenced heavily by the sound of the pedal steel guitar, both are lauded by their fellow musicians, both have had a recording output frequently verging on the barely adequate, let down by limited vocalists or so-so rhythm sections. Buchanan is no visionary, but he plays one mean guitar and this album displays his fingers at their fiercest. KW

The Big Chill (Motown)

Risky Business (Virgin)

Compiling existing songs into movie soundtracks is always a risky business. The first collection here is for a charming new 'teenage rites of passage' feature, however, the album is a mess. Old time rock'n'roll brackets Euro-modernes' Tangerine Dream, and Prince rub shoulders with Journey and Jeff Beck. Avoid! On the other hand *The Big Chill* assembled 17 GREAT 60s tracks without putting a foot wrong (Three Dog Night excepted). Unfortunately only 10 make it on to the album. Music fans from the movie's generation should already own nearly all these tracks. For anyone younger this soundtrack presents a helluva fine introduction to that musical era. PT

Lita Ford

Out For Blood (Mercury)

Another gal goes gonzo. Ms Ford was once lead guitarist behind Joan Jett in 70s jailbait group the Runaways. Now she's fronting a leather'n'studs trio and handling vocal and writing chores as well. It's the usual stockpot of HM clichés of course, but Lita and the boys storm along like true believers. OK, so the silly fantasy sleeve photos and several song titles suggest as much cynicism as enthusiasm. But at least Ford's brand of gum-metal is free from the monotonously self-conscious bad-girl posturing that marred Jett's last album. PT

Queen, The Works (EMI)

When it comes to cashing in on trends then Queen have no competitors. Their career has spanned heavy metal, glitter/camp, rockabilly, Chic-funk and now synthesiser dance-floor opportunism as in 'Radio Gaga' which opens *The Works*. As well as being a silly dig at mechanised society, the music is typical ponderous Queen with Elvis (that's Presley) swagger on 'Man On The Prowl' and Cabaret Voltaire programming on 'Machines' thrown in for luck. Diabolical. GK

Pointer Sisters, Break Out (Planet)

After at least half a dozen albums controlling the Pointers, is their anything more producer Richard Perry can do with them?

And does anyone care? Well, maybe. Basically it's the usual smooth blend of soul and showbiz but this time it's given the big electro-beat treatment. Also plenty of uptempo numbers from the currently hot hackwriters. *Break Out* may not make it in Aotea Square on a Friday night but it'll sound pretty smart at the barbeque to christen the new patio on the split-level. PT

Billy Joel

Cold Spring Harbour (CBS)

Dear Editor, am I being punished for some misdeed, or am I getting a reputation as a wimp? Either way, you are sadly mistaken if you think I'm going to smile on this pallid piece of plastic. For the record, this is Joel's first ever LP, recorded back in 1971 and now reissued (or should it be resuscitated?). Dreary, maudlin, self-obsessed ballads. No undiscovered gems, no shiny embryonic talent. Even the present MOR monster is preferable to this porridge. DC

Mel Torme

Songs Of New York (Atlantic)

Torme has always been an outstanding musician, right up there with Sinatra as an interpreter of 50s ballads and swing. He was equally responsible for bridging the vocal divide between jazz and mainstream. (Recently he even turned up on a Was, [Not Was] album.) This set is a 50s reissue wherein Torme sings 13 love songs set in New York. Exemplary arrangements too. PT

Blue Oyster Cult

Revolution By Night (CBS)

A from more consistent album than their last studio outing *Fire of Unknown Origin*. 'Shooting Shark' and 'Light Years of Love' are the standouts and 'Feel the Thunder' is appropriately titled, sending your speakers into reverberation. There is no filler on this driving, no-nonsense album but I wonder if the band has any audience in Godzone in 1984. DP

Pat Benatar

Live From Earth (Chrysalis)

Despite its title the album includes two studio tracks, one of which is 'Love Is A Battlefield'. And even if — no, especially if — you consider that single the best thing she's ever done you still won't like the album. The rest, a supposed 'best of ... in concert' is the usual stadium range bombast and melodrama. Moreover, the production lacks presence; vocal echoes and murky mix suggest the recording unit was positioned too far back. So buy the single if you must and hope that its bright, pulsating style may at last indicate a decent future for Benatar's undoubted vocal prowess. PT

Gary Numan, Warriors (WEA)

Ho hum, more mechanised

monotones from the man who humps daleks? No! Beyond the stolen hooks, lyrics, Mad-Max-meets-Billy-Idol sleeve and *that* voice, is a quite palatable set of warm, up-funky, dance floor backing tracks. Emphasis this time on Byrne rather than Bowie and heightened by some superb jazz-funk backing. Though there's little here to hum, *Warriors* still outclasses anything fellow gadget clankers Ultravox have done in ages. Now, how 'bout some toons? AR

The Animals, Ark (IRS)

It's almost as if some inverted Dorian Gray syndrome were at work here. The sleeve photo certainly shows that they've aged at least 20 years since 'House Of The Rising Sun' but the music remains time-warped in the mid 60s. The main difference — production standards aside — is that then the songs were nearly all covers; here they're mostly originals, though Burdon's the only band member writing. Most surprising is the rich strength of his voice. Least surprising is the mundaneness of the material. They scored a hit with *The Night* in America though. PT

Philip Glass

Koyaanisqatsi Soundtrack

(Island)

This film apparently has no dialogue or narrative structure, instead bringing background elements to the fore to produce 'a unique and intense look at the superstructure and mechanics of modern life.' So sayeth the publicity blurb. The title is a Hopi Indian word meaning 'Life out of balance.' Francis Ford Coppola adds his name to this, and Philip Glass is well known to fans of the avant-garde. So what is the music like? Very gothic, I suppose, full of chanting and wailing and odd noises from various instruments. At the expense of being branded a pleb, I found the whole thing insufferably dull and depressing. DC

Roger Daltrey

Parting Should Be Painless (WEA)

Interesting title, a swipe at his publicised wrangles with Townshend perhaps. Who really cares anymore? This set sounds nothing like the old band anyway, not with a couple of ex Blockheads and various session stars on hand. The songwriting is pretty capable too, ranging from the well-known (Brian Ferry, Eurhythmics) to the unknown. But, even with Daltrey containing his tendency to holler (title track excepted), is it enough? Just, and then only if you're inclined to tolerance. Predominantly mid-tempo AOR, competently performed and produced, deserving all the usual adjectives of faint praise. PT

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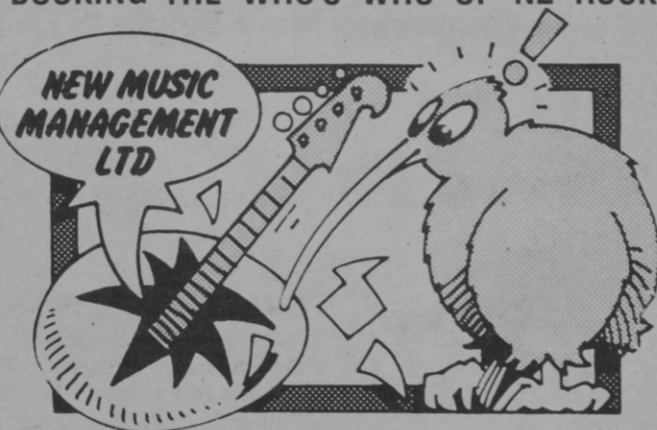
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