

# Letters

Post to 'RIU' Letters, PO Box 5689, Auckland 1.

## Not Scared!

It is indeed Russell Brown's misfortune that he finds Peking Man's single 'Scared of a Sound' irritating. A look at the NZ music charts shows that many people don't hold this view. The fact that Peking Man have established a unique style is a credit to all members of the band and is refreshing to hear. I would suggest the reason you think there is something smug

about this single is because Pat Ulrich performs difficult phrasing with ease and shows exceptional talent, which you are not prepared to recognise. Perhaps a closer listen to this excellent single would prompt you to make constructive criticism instead of scathing comments.

An Avid Listener Auckland

## When the Kids Had Killed the Man ...

The only way most of your critics seem to be able to "deal" with bands is to surgically remove the leader from his/her pack (preferably over a long period of time so no one notices). Stop it, it's really dumb and it encourages the worst

aspects of ego drool by the musician and the audience. Don't throw a band into a heap with the most important member on top, it's an insult to the band and often an embarrassment to the idolised/victimised individual. Concentrate on the music and the playing — the art not the bloody "artiste". It's a balance, quit trying to upset it.

Carol Blackler and Ian Stewart Christchurch



## Singles bar

### Chaka Khan I Feel For You 12" (WEA)

For my money Chaka Khan has already produced one of the year's highlights with 'Ain't Nobody'. This one stretches the imagination a bit more, spicing up the 'new soul' feel with snatches of street happenin' electro-rapping. If you also consider that the tune was penned by none other than millionaire prat Prince. I'd say she can't really go wrong. Can we have the video now please?

### Animal Nightlife Mr Solitaire (Island)

Animal Nightlife have been lounge lizarding around the London club scene for several years now. They debuted with a great but sadly neglected single titled 'Love Is the Great Pretender'. Subsequent releases failed to recapture that initial excitement until 'Mr Solitaire', their first British Top Thirty hit. Smooth and inoffensive, it crosses the Atlantic at the same point as Spandau, laundering its white soul lyrics over a bed of rich rhythm. Tasty.

### Gil Scott Heron Re-Ron 12" (Arista)

A man with more credibility than Dixie Whitley, Gil Scott Heron has always been one step ahead of the pack. This is a marked departure from his usual style. Employing a hard electro

nest of tight programming, he raps his way through 'Death and Destruction' by Ronald Ray-gun. It's the neutron bomb from Lebanon. When you're wrong, you're wrong and when you're right, you're right.

## Black Uhuru

### What Is Life 12" (Island)

I'm no great reggae connoisseur but I'm sure this one ain't the full quid. Black Uhuru are an ital dread band who have helped win many new converts to the Rasta cause, here they sound limp and uninspired. All is not lost, however. 'Party Next Door', one of the two tracks on the flip, saves face or off their faces or something. You gotta get up to get down!

### Richard 'Dimples' Field Your Wife is Cheating On Us 12" (RCA)

Billy Jean Part 496, this thumps along in the M.J. groove thang but manages to beat the original hands down when it comes to lyrical content. All we need now is pirate FM stations to play all these records. Dream on.

## Alison Moyet

### All Cried Out 12" (CBS)

'Love Resurrection' proved to be a real grower, I hope 'All Cried Out' does the same. Another Swain and Jolley collaboration, it lacks any initial bite but somehow leaves a sweet taste lingering. Maybe it's all those around, around, around, arounds.

## Mark Phillips

# 1 Shake 2 Summation 3

## The Chills

### Dolebags (Flying Nun)

Mmmm ... a nice miserable song for Christmas. Martin Phillips laments the creepin' cancer of unwedness, staying in bed way too late, "Counting down the lonely hours / Drinking lots and taking showers". A considerably more sophisticated arrangement than previous Chills records, probably pointing the way for future recordings, and possessed of the same unforced creativity. If it's not quite the song that the two previous singles were, it's got a

helluva lot to live up to. I still defy you not to involuntarily sing it to yourself after three listens ... Martin Kean's 'Hidden Bay' is very short and very sharp. I don't know what it's about but it's great.

## Netherworld Dancing Toys

### The Real You (Virgin)

Although this song is a stand-out live it obviously had to be rearranged for recording and, with the aid of Don McGlashan the Netherworlds have come up with their most sophisticated record to date. But the song's altered balance and mock-reggae feel do take away some of the song's tautness and impact. Still beautifully sung by Malcolm Black, even if he is only allowed to let rip for a very short time. 'Standing In the Rain' captures the band's live appeal but I think Nick Sampson has better songs ('This Town' for example) unrecorded. 'New Zealand Love Song' is just Malcolm and guitar and although some might find it just a bit too guileless, there's no denying its loveliness.

## Katango, Pick It Up (Zulu)

Katango would like to be on the cover of *Smash Hits* and that's kind of a nice ambition in a way. They're certainly not going to do it with silly adolescent dross like the initial A-Side, 'Pop Boys'. But 'Pick It Up' is something different altogether. Well executed, with just the right sprinkling of pretension, it actually communicates something youthful in its grooves — and that's important, no?

## The Expendables

### The Flower (Flying Nun)

Quite a change for the Expendables, 'The Flower' is a moody, beautiful balanced song. Michael Kime's bass defines the song's colour and takes it through its length, Jay Clarkson's guitar twinkles in and out and in the middle Robert Keys' drumming is all economy. Jay's singing sounds better than it ever has, now that she's relaxed it. 'Man With No Desire' is similar but can't quite manage the same grace. A wonderful single.

## The Narcs

### Lazy Susan (CBS)

The Narcs have long been very good at being the Narcs — certainly better than all the bands around the country who would like to be the Narcs. This is typical Narcs metal pop — low on redeeming artistic merit but high on eagerness to entertain. "Catchy"

would be the word.

## The Rip Timeless Peace (Flying Nun)

The Rip had to hang around for a long time without the opportunity to record properly and in some ways this is a typical first record. There's a kind of bluntness which crops up here and there and which I think the band will deal with on their next record. Meantime, the four songs here are good and in 'The Holy Room' there are elements of something really excellent that hasn't quite been worked out yet. I've heard this record being criticised for being "too typically Dunedin" but the Rip have as much right to play their own way as anybody else. I look forward to seeing them live soon.

## Working With Walt

### The Prophet (Jayrem)

I'm still having trouble making up my mind about this one. 'The Prophet' is Rob Hellriegel's personal perspective on Maori leader Rua Kenana and I think it has the potential to be stirring but there's something sluggish about it here, perhaps the rather standard rock arrangement and production (enlivened, admittedly, by the brightest acoustic guitar). I do suspect that Working With Walt will meet with success.

## Economic Wizards

### Starve the Lizards (Eelman)

Four tracks, of which only 'Pakuranga Girl' is really good. That's a sweet, tongue in cheek ballad addressed to Lorraine Downes and beautifully sung by Jim Steel. The others are pretty much unexceptional R&B, although 'If Anyone Can, The Vatican Can' has a devilishly clever lyric.

## Andrew 'Clyde' Clouston

### The Bag (A Funky Barp) (Eelman)

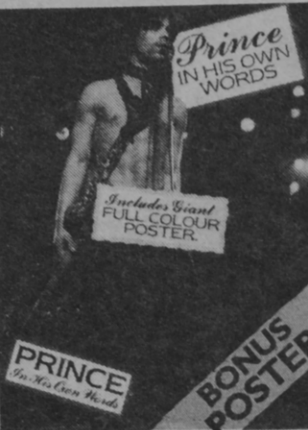
'The Bag' is an immaculately executed soul instrumental that's fairly enjoyable but comes across a little like an exercise in style. Clouston's sax is more upfront in Alain Toussaint's 'Freedom' (which is one of those tunes which really does communicate its title) and 'That's What I Like'. Great Eelart cover and I assume Andrew and friends had a lotta fun doing it all.

## The Jumbies

### Stuff Of Dreams (Flying Nun)

The Jumbies are in fact eccentric bass player Peter Arnold, who did it all here, with the help of Clare Timings on rhythm guitar and (very good) backing.

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