

Records

Mary Jane Girls
Only Four You
Motown

Okay sports fans, here's some funky stuff for y'all. The second album from the fab Mary Jane Girls — seven dance cuts and one immaculate ballad, held together by a classic Rick James production. The record kicks off with 'In My House'; JoJo and the girls riding a nasty bass and drum rhythm spiked with tasty keyboard riffs. It's a monster and deserves to be massive. There is a danger with a Rick James thang of degenerating into



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a "party in progress" groove that ends up going nowhere. But not with this album. Each track offers something fresh, be it the rhythms or the excellent vocals. Check out the backing singing on 'Break It Up' and the sex rap on 'Wild and Crazy Love'. One of my faves is the steamy 'Shadow Lover', which sounds better than anything Rick James has ever produced.

James has to take the honours for the overall sound, but this album shows that the Mary Jane Girls are more than mere reflections of their auteur's fantasies. They are four very talented singers, easily one of the best acts at Motown — and far better than Prince's cartoon queens. Hot stuff! Be there or be square. **Kerry Buchanan**

The Whispers
So Good (Solar)

The Whispers have come up with a winner with this one. It's split into one side for dancin' and one for romancin', to cool the pace. It's the dancin' side that attracts me — four very modern funk feels produced by Midnight Star's Reggie Calloway. 'Contagious', in particular, is a real animal, one that bites and scratches its way out of the speakers. The quieter second side it perhaps a mite too slow, but still contains a couple of gems in the title track and the weepy 'Never Too Late'. The photo on the back shows the boys looking very pleased with themselves — and, with an album of this style and class, they deserve to. **KB**

Teena Marie
Starchild (Epic)

Wot's the blackest, funkiest track on the radio? Probably 'Lovergirl' by Teena Marie, a young white singer who recorded several LPs for Motown before this, her second for Epic. Teena Marie is a master of the uptempo funky groove that she learned from Rick James, who brought her to Motown. A committed Christian, Tina brings a quite remarkable fervour to stomps like 'Lovergirl' (the 12" single is essential), 'Jammin' and 'Help Youngblood Get to the Freaky Party'. On the last, Tina cites Bible chapter and verse to a guy who wants to take her to a party while she is en route to church — this all takes place over

a furious funky backdrop. A novel lyric/melody reconciliation. Well done, Teena. Fervour on the speedy songs is appropriate, but on the ballads, Teena buries herself in emotion-drenched drama. A pity, cos there's three great boogie numbers here amongst the suds. **MC**

Stevie Wonder
Love Songs (Motown)

What? A whole album like 'I Just Called To Say I Love You'? Makes ya wanna puke! No, hang on, it's actually nothing like that, just packaged to dupe the punters. What we've actually got is a compilation of Wonder-stuff from '66 through to '71, when he was beyond the 'Little Stevie' shout-ups but had not yet reached the staggering maturity of *Talking Book* et al. Of the 16 tracks here, most were deservedly hits, a good few being covers of already well-known songs. Understandably *Love Songs* is sequenced so that the sweeter stuff comes first, but if you're interested in the delights of late 60s prime Motown try a taste of the opening three tracks on side two. (And if you're then left puzzled why he still doesn't get it on that strong with a love song, go and cop his duet 'It's You' with Dionne Warwick from the *Woman In Red* soundtrack.) Meanwhile, this album is a good gap-filler in any record collection. **PT**

Whitney Houston (Arista)

Well, I don't know, this thing has had rave reviews overseas, but it leaves me kinda cold. It's all very nice; duets with Jermaine Jackson

and Teddy Pendergrass (Willie Nelson must have been busy!), production work from four producers and a voice that sounds like a cross between Aretha Franklin and Randy Crawford. Low spots occur whenever Michael Masser and Narada M. Walden start pushing the buttons and pick up on the Kashif tracks, 'You Give Good Love' and 'Thinking About You', which have a nice sense of rhythm. But the schlock really sets in with her version of George Benson's 'The Greatest Love Of All' — not exactly soul's finest moment. Well, so much for going against world opinion — now it's your turn. **KB**

Rebbie Jackson
Centipede (CBS)

I'm not sure whether to believe all these sisters are for real. For so many years we only heard from five brothers, then up pops Janet, then La Toyah. And now Rebbie (pronounced Ree-bee). But seeing as Michael wrote and produced her hit — and who else would imagine love as a myriapod? — and the other four guys are credited with her second track on side one, then perhaps she is genuine. Doesn't help beyond that though. The rest of the new numbers are weedy and her singing's not much better. As for the covered songs: we don't need another version of 'I Feel For You', especially as it copies the Pointers, and we'll only like 'A Fork in the Road' if we're unfamiliar with Smokey Robinson's original. Perhaps an album of all three sisters' best tracks would just about be okay. **PT**

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31 Sweetwaters, Swingers, Mi-Sex.

32 Police & Split Enz interviews, Sharon O'Neill.

34 Tom Petty & Street Talk interviews, Mi-Sex, Virgin supplement, Whizz Kids & Pop Mechanix bandfiles.

35 'Quadrophonia', Bob Geldof & Kevin Stanton interviews, Newz & Flight X-7 bandfiles.

38 Howard Devoto, Tim Finn interviews.

39 XTC, Lip Service, Motels.

40 Martha Davis, David Byrne, Dave McArtney, Doors, Bruce Springsteen, Hammond Gamble.

41 Coup D'Etat; Flowers (Icehouse), John Lennon, Clash, Elton John.

42 Clash interview, Cold Chisel, INXS, Tigers, Jo Jo Zep, Borich/Tilders.

44 Adam Ant, Associates & Police interviews, Stevie Wonder.

48 Cold Chisel, Blams, Wgt'n Zone.

49 Angels, Beat, Lemmy Motorhead, Desmond Dekker, Heavy Metal Guide.

50 Swingers, U2, Psychedelic Furs, the Clean.

51 Newmatics, Cramps, Stray Cats, UB40, Blind Date & Gordons interviews.

52 Echo and the Bunnymen, Danse Macabre, Penknife Glides, Mockers, Valentinos, Jimmy & the Boys.

54 Dave McArtney & Pink Flamingos,
- Go-Gos interview, Sunnyboys, INXS.

56 Teardrop Explodes, DD Smash, Mick Jones Part 2, Neighbours, Richard Burgess.

57 Clean, Pretenders, South Island bands, Joan Armatrading, Mental As Anything, Chaz Jankel.

58 Blams, Teardrops, Hall & Oates, Bill Wyman, Kottke/Redbone interviews.

59 Human League, Men At Work, Chills, Tim Finn, Motels, Elvis Costello live, Furtive EP.

61 Graham Brazier & Harry Lyon, Fall, Jim Carrol, Daggy & the Dickheads, Hip Singles, Dropbears.

63 Simple Minds, Jim Kerr interviewed, Split Enz Part 2, Renee Geyer, Nocturnal Projections, Willie Dayson Blues Band, Hunters & Collectors.

65 Yazoo (Alison Moyet interview), Joe Cocker, Zoo (ex Pop Mechanix), Guriz, Jo Jo Zep.

68 Herbs, Culture Club, Bauhaus, Kiwi Animal, No Tag, Sharon O'Neill, Thompson Twins, ChCh Special (Wastrels, Flying Nun, Bill Dieren, etc.).

69 Joni Mitchell, Dance Exponents, Who, Neighbours, Dire Straits, Talk Talk, Miltown Stowaways, Blond Comedy.

73 Wham, Dead Kennedys, Coconut Rough, Angels, Marginal Era, Grammar Boys, Fishschool, John Cale, Studio profile.

74 Malcolm McLaren, Heaven 17, Joan Armatrading, Sharon O'Neill, Childrens Hour.

75 Tim Finn, John Cale, Jonathan Richman, Hammond Gamble, Dick Driver.
- 80 Police, Paul Young, Motown feature, John Peel Wastrels, Bryan Adams, Big Chill.

81 Smiths, Mockers, Def Leppard, Violent Femmes, Miltown Stowaways, Chills, Doublehappys, Marvin Gaye, Alfred Hitchcock.

82 Billy Idol, Pamela Stephenson, Four Tops, Temptations, Verlaines, Uriah Heep.

83 Elvis Costello, Thompson Twins, Netherworld Dancing Toys, Mockers, Paul Morley.

84 Style Council (Paul Weller interview), Echo & the Bunnymen, Midnight Oil, Kiwi Animal, Sneaky Feelings, Depeche Mode.

85 Mockers, Special AKA, Motorhead, Icehouse, Great Unwashed, Coconut Rough, Neil Finn, Fixx.

86 U2, REM, OMD, Hoodoo Gurus, Dance Exponents, Jive Bombers, Alligator Blues, Stylistics.

87 DD Smash, U2, Bill Dieren Pt 1, Nick Cave, Stevie Ray Vaughan.

88 Herbs, Talking Heads, Aztec Camera, Narcs, Car Crash Set, Axemen, SPK.

89 Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Beatles, Deep Purple, ZZ Top, Twisted Sister, Aotea Riot, Eurogliders, Rip, Say Yes To Apes, Look Blue Go Purple.

90 Lou Reed, Go-Between, Paul Hewson, Topp Twins.

91 Neil Young, Giorgio Moroder, Waterboys, David Puttnam, Freudian Slips, Electric Pandas.

92 Hunters and Collectors, Lloyd Cole, Pelicans, Peter Garrett, Left Right & Centre, Economic Wizards.

93 Dance Exponents, Huey Lewis, Robert Palmer (Power Station), Peking Man, Circus Block 4, This Kind Of Punishment.

94 New Order interview, Iron Maiden, Stranglers, Johnny's, Michael Winslow, Plans For A Building.

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