Records

That's the Short and the Long of It

Flying Nun Looking at the gatefold cover, it seems that the main event on the record is going to be the 45rpm side, which carries the monster version of Nothing's Going To Happen. All 23 people involved get their pictures on the inside of the cover and what must have been a chaotic and most enjoyable day Mascot Studios is lovingly detailed. The version takes the gig-closing band expansion for the song to its natural conclusion, seems to have been superceded by 'Crush' as the showstopper. It's good, an interesting diversion with the sense of event you expect from the Tall Dwarfs, if not quite the perfect wall of sound. Nothing's Going To Stop It' is apparently a dub mix with "meaningless, if vaguely threatening lyrics" that sounds better on headphones and also gives a glimpse of what some of the instrumentalists were doing in the maelstrom of the full

But it's the 10 songs on the other side that really take the ear and stretch it. After a typically gris-ly kid's joke from the sub-five years Miriam, there are two 1982 tracks, a mostly instrumental called 'The Hills Are Alive' and a different take of 'Clover'. They're both pretty good but the more recent stuff is

Even though they're eight frac-tured little songs full of odd sounds and twisted melodies, these songs stick together in the mind like glue, from the twangy guitar and falsetto harmony of 'Sleet' to the ragged band sound of 'Gone To the Worms,' an old Ene-my song. Apart from those two, standouts are the rapturous melody and great singing on 'Burning Blue' and the mean, distorted 'Get Outta the Garage, an anti-heroin song born out of a dislike for seeing people you like turn into stupid junkies rather than any puritanism, and ... nah, they're all good actually. Worthy of note is the startling live version of 'Woman'. It's recorded on a walkman and the



Robert Smith

voices the condenser mike picks up are as much part of the track as the song itself. It eats the Canned Music version like it was a late afternoon snack and suggests that maybe more live stuff should be available for multiple. should be available for public

should be available for public consumption.

Overall, this is easily the best Tall Dwarfs record and it gives lie to the silly generalisation that you get worse as you make more records and clock up years. Anyone who goes on with this "father figure" just only just doesn't listen. figure" jive obviously doesn't listen to records. The sounds, the ar-rangements, the songs and the packaging (which I haven't the space to detail) are all done with care and talent. The best NZ ecord so far this year. Russell Brown

The Head On the Door

the couch and relax. Tell me this

year's problems."
"Yesterday I got so old I felt like

"Oh dear. Poor boy, sounds like you've got it worse than ever this time. Haven't you got even one nice, happy thing to say about cats or caterpillars or something?" "No! No! No! Push him away. I

crouch in fear and wait. I've made

myself so sick."

"Ad nauseum, dear boy."

"If only I was sure that my head on the door was a dream. I only I could remember anything at all,"

"Ah ... if only."

"A smile to hide the fear away. I am paralysed by the blood of

"Poor deluded creature. But yes I did notice that the whole thing sounded a bit paralysed, stati y'know ... slow. A morbid retro-grade step career-wise, Robert. I prescribe a distortion driven

"Push" "Oh yes, I see you have one. But is that enough? You're sounding better than last time — why not match this aggression with some lyrical positivism, eh?"

With that parting advice, I led him to the door of my consultan-cy. Robert's was a truly tragic case — with such turmoil and selfdoubt, I was surprised he was still alive. But there was little more that I could do — he had bared his soul, I had collected my fee and directed him to a good shrink and a cheap barber.

As the door closed behind him I wondered — could it really be true that it was only the acoustic guitar that kept the Cure from being a terminal 17-year-old's hard rock dinosaur??

The manic depressive was played by Robert Smith.
- With Paul McKessar as his doctor of madness (like su-su-su-

suicide city, y'know?).

Husker Du Flip Your Wig SST import

Husker Du are from Minneapo lis but they're nothing like Prince. They make a weird, searing, melodic noise with their three pieces and they make records to be played loudly. The last Husker Du album, New Day Rising, was a one on which a sheet of shimmer-ing distortion seemed to hang out in front of everything else. Although aspects of it were quite conventional, it didn't sound quite like anything I'd heard before.

For Flip Your Wig, the band has ditched longtime producer Spot and done the job themselves. And at the same time that this record sounds dirtier and denser than its predecessor, it's also possessed of some remarkable melody. Most of the first side has engaging pop elements to it, especially 'Green Eyes,' which sounds like the Ra-mones playing one of their surf toons with much more interesting chords. At the other end of the scale (and the record) there are lit-tle sound essays like 'Don't Know tle sound essays like 'Don't Know Yet', which sound like the scant bits I've heard of the third Huskers album, Zen Arcade. 'The Wit and the Wisdom' is an eloquent near-instrumental in the same way as the title track of *New Day Rising* (a truly great get-outta-bed song)

Lyrically, the songs divide roughly four ways: the edgyness about being this person in this band epitomised in the title track; what is this world/country that I can't identify with? ('Divide and Conquer'); and pragmatic positivism about relationships ('Green vism about relationships (dicenteys) and personal prospectives (Flexible Flyer). They're all simply but effectively written. Without fuss, Husker Du say as good as

Without fuss, Husker Du remind you what a powerful sound a gui-tar can make. They also show you can be loud without being stupid you can play rock 'n' roll and still make it sound exciting and new. A real good record, and, best of all, one which Sounds Unlimited in enough of to bring the retail price down to \$17.99 — which given the value of our dollar is an absolute

Russell Brown

Guadacanal Diary Walking In the Shadow of the Big Man Elektra

stir in the import business here, so much so that WEA have decided to take the risk and home press it. It's a risk worth taking. And here it is, a band with a name culled from the USA's first offensive in WW 2 and an album title that sports a

sense of adventure, respectful yet ambitious, just on the right side of self-importance.

It's safe to say that they've yet to be bestowed with the art of mak-ing Great Rock 'n' Roll, but there are some classic strains of longlost but newly re-found American rock mythology echoing through

nese songs. Opting for a clean-cut folky vo cal delivery in contrast to the world-weary stoop of Stipe's R.E.M. Dylan or the occasional C&W twang of kissin' cousins the Long Ryders, Guadacanal Diary virtually launch into the bride-wore black pathos meets bravado of 'Trail of Tears'.

Guitars mesh for noble causes and sweet melodies on 'Fire From Heaven, 'Sleepers Awake' and 'Why Do the Heathen Rage' and memories of the Byrds (not again? yup, 'fraid so) sifted through 'Shake Some Action' Flamin'

Groovies get hard to ignore.

A first album, and sure these guys are still learning: the second side sidles out on a doodle of an instrumental track and a roots homage — another version of 'Kumbayah'. But there's enough untainted exhiliration and Southern nobility to lift this band into the ranks of the current

George Kay

Aretha Franklin Who's Zoomin' Who?

Okay, let's get this straight. This is not a "comeback", a re-emergence from the land of lost souls. Aretha has never left us, and to many she is and always will be the ultimate hip soul queen. Those yelling "comeback" are talk

ing money and not art.

This is destined to be her biggest-selling album, partly due to the attempted "younger sound" that apparently seeks to grab those American MTV watchers' wallets. That's where the trouble starts — the dialectic between commerce and art is a hard one to fuse. When it works, it's wonderful, like the joyful rhythm ride on 'Free way of Love' and the raucous duet with Annie Lennox on 'Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves' But when it doesn't work it sounds forced and obvious, like 'Another Night, a radio rock song; 'Push', a misguided duet with Peter Wolf; and the Carribean-tinged 'Ain't Nobody Ever Loved You.'

This is not necessarily sub-

standard material and Aretha still sings the songs with elan, but sub-tlety isn't part of producer Narada Michael Walden's vocabulary. My favourite Aretha albums are those done with Arif Mardin and the two done with Luther Vandross ways inventive and never blatant. But guess what sells better? In fact, my two favoruite tracks are those produced by Aretha herself, the revival of 1965's 'Sweet Bitter

Love' and the instructive 'Integrity'. Yes, it's a great record, but check out the back catalogue for

Kerry Buchanan

Culprit and the King

1980, and an "ambitious" Fagan starts on a musical career that leads, five years on, to a Sydney recording studio with an Australasian record deal, an English producer (David Richards) and a band of musicians who have th

The decision to record the band as naturally as possible on this, their second album, was obviously the right one in retrospect and has succeeded in capturing their mag-ic with just the right amount of hi-

tech studio colouring. Well, here we have 11 tracks of pure pop for now people. The sin-gles are here — 'Forever Tuesday Morning', 'One Black Friday' and 'Seven Years Not Wasted'. Then 'Seven Years Not Wasted'. Then the bouncy rock of 'Friend of a Stranger', Casualty' and 'New Day Dawning'. The band collaborative effort 'Home Again (Miss Toffolesse)' opens up a new horizon in songwriting. There's another classic Fagan mood ballad, a la 'After the Rain', called 'A Winter's Tale' which builde from a Winter's Tale, which builds from a sparse vocal and piano intro to a grand guitar/keyboard sound, trailing off with the piano which began the song. And sing along with 'Another Boring Day In the Amazon' which shows the Fagan sense of humour. What more

could a Mockers fan ask for?
There you are, an album full of singles! Well ... maybe there's a couple of B-sides in there, but I'm sure the rest will stand up to radio. I know my daughter, Justine, gives this album her seal of approval and in this business her peer group "thumbs up" is essential. Classic NZ pop for the 80s and Simon Elton

SILVIOS

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