

Records

Box of Frogs Strange Land Epic

Box of Frogs are the rhythm section of the old Yardbirds with the addition of John Fiddler on guitar and vocals, augmented by various guest artists. Their first album used such guitar luminaries as Jeff Beck and Rory Gallagher to beef up the sound and the result was a perfectly acceptable blues-tinged album, but lacking inspiration in the songwriting department.

Strange Land changes all that. The songs are varied and pulse with real energy, using the considerable talents of a group of artists that reads like a who's who of popular music. The highlights are many — Ian Dury's vocal on the Frogs' composition 'Avenge'; Roger Chapman stars on the title track and gives a devastating performance on the remake of the Yardbirds' hit 'Heart Full of Soul'. Rory Gallagher provides exhilarating guitar and electric sitar on 'Hanging from the Wreckage' and Steve Hackett a punishing lead on 'Trouble'. All tracks are anchored by the solid rhythm section of the Frogs and all songs are self penned, excluding 'Heart Full of Soul'.

There is no filler on this consis-

tently good album. Absolutely essential listening for anyone interested in quality rock music, and proof that the old proverb "too many cooks spoil the broth" is not always the case.

David Perkins

Mint Juleps One Time (Stiff)

"We're six super swingers from Stepney, East London and four of us are sisters, although I bet you don't know which four," quips Julie, the lead larynx in this all-woman acapella sextet recorded live in London. From doo-wop to rock and roll they jazz up classics like 'Jimmy Mack,' 'Da Do Ron Ron' and 'Stand By Me.' Yet the highlight has to be a rip-snorting gymnastic version of 'Shout.' Hearing is believing. Great fun.

GK

Accept Russian Roulette (CBS)

Fiery production from Michael Wagener (Dokken, Stryper) helps make for a good follow on from previous best Accept. 'TV War' sets the pace for this German band's latest offering. AC/DC and Judas Priest influences are put to great effect, especially on the title track and 'Heaven is Hell.' This Russian Roulette is pretty hot so give it a shot!

GD

The Doors Best of the Doors (Elektra)

Digitally remastered double album covering the essential Doors tracks. Hard to quibble with the

choice of tracks, and unquestionably superior to previous compilations. Diehards will bemoan the absence of 'Alabama Song,' 'Not to Touch the Earth,' 'L'America,' but at least the extended 'The End' and 'When the Music's Over' are included. If you have no Doors' albums buy this as an excellent overview of a band whose music has endured better than most from that era.

DP

Dokken Under Lock and Key (Elektra)

More of the same from LA based Kraut metallers Dokken. Superb production, huge sound, thundering drums, screaming guitars in the Van Halen mould, except no one sounds as good as Van Halen or ever will, even without the immortal Dave Lee Roth. Standout tracks — 'Unclaim the Night,' 'Slippin' Away,' 'Will the Sun Rise' — but a high standard throughout. No duffs here. Recommended for avid metal aficionados quite highly, like seven out of 10.

GC

Tommy Keene Songs from the Film (Geffen)

Tommy Keene evokes a host of memories on his first album for a major label. Roger McGuinn, Tom Petty and Elliot Murphy are all here in spirit. All tracks are penned by Keene except for an impressive cover of Lou Reed's 'Kill Your Sons.' Standout tracks are 'Underworld,' 'Pieces that are Gone' and 'My Mother Looked Like Marilyn Mon-

roe.' A fine collection of bittersweet pop songs. Check it out — you may be pleasantly surprised. DP

Floy Joy Weak in the Presence of Beauty (Virgin)

This album sounds entirely like a Foreigner single, with the exception of 'This is My Time,' which sounds like Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. This, I sourly maintain, is a sad fate for a band who once had the sublime Carol Thompson on vocals and a fabulous single called 'Operator Operator.' Floy Joy could have become an after-dinner Lloyd Cole and the Commotions, but they have banded out to an extraordinary and surprising degree. Too-smooth production and arrangements have diluted honest musicianship; *Weak in the Presence of Beauty* feels more like a year. A shame.

CT

The Icicle Works The Small Price of a Bicycle (Beggars' Banquet)

Acid-rock revivalists in the guise of post-punk psychedelia. The Icicle Works re-work many old cliches but are hardly progressive or frightening — I'd rather listen to King Crimson's *Lizard* than an imitation thereof. Say, has anyone read *Neil's Book of the Dead* yet? Song titles such as 'Conscience of Kings' and 'Book of Reason' suggest that it may be having a broad effect on the psychedelic scene. Amaazing.

CT

Wall of Voodoo Seven Days in Sammystown (Illegal Records)

Seven years on, and the third album from this LA five-piece who scored recognition three summers ago with the classic track 'Mexican Radio.' The band, who were once described as "like early Devo without the wackiness," serve up another dose of imaginative and disjointed fun. A bit more of an edge to the music, especially on the opener 'Far Side of Crazy,' without any loss to their quirkiness. Not great, but worth a spin or too.

SGE

Lou Reed City Lights (Arista)

A none-too-successful attempt by Arista to cash in on Lou's re-found success with the record-buying public by now trying to sell him as the "Grand-daddy of love songs" for God's sake. One whole side taken up with songs from his miserable *Take No Prisoners* album and the second side consisting of songs from his more recent albums, not the best ones either. If you want a Lou Reed compilation, buy *Rock and Roll Diary*, you don't need this.

BM

Confessor First Sin (Jayrem)

Three heavy metal tracks from Auckland band Confessor for those who like it loud, fast, rough and raw. They played support for Twisted Sister when they were called Bad Blood and are planning to tour the country soon.

GD

AC/DC Who Made Who (EMI)

Compilation soundtrack album for *Maximum Overdrive*, the new movie from longtime AC/DC fan and horror writer Stephen King. The classic 'Hell's Bells' and 'For Those About to Rock' are two of the tracks included of the current AC/DC and there's 'Ride On' from Bon Scott days. Worthwhile for the three newly released tracks and blue Angus cover. Should be one hell of a movie!

GD

Queen A Kind of Magic (EMI)

A hugely successful world tour and Live Aid performance and Queen release their 13th album. All five tracks on side one have the potential of being hit singles, while the other side is grandiose-style production and focuses on Brian May's guitar work. Unusual forthcoming films *Highlander* and *Iron Eagle* contain some of this music, so watch for them. With Freddie cutting short their present tour for a "two year break" one wonders if it could be Queen's last spell together?

GD

Rose Tattoo A Decade of Rock (EMI)

Ten Years of Tatts' brand of rock-'n'roll put together into one playing. Lots of slide guitar, Angry Anderson's raw vocals and a very live sound courtesy of Harry Vanda and George Young. With four albums to their name, this covers the best of 'em.

GD

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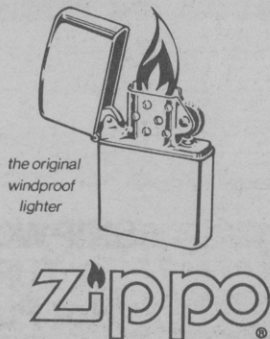
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