

Yonder' is the nearest he comes to that. Instead he varies the angle of attack from the undercurrent menace in 'Twin Cadillac Valentine's' rolling thunder to the delicate introductory flicks of 'Talking Doll' and the more orthodox bump 'n' grind of 'Holiday Head' and 'Smash the Market Place'.

Last year's mini-LP *Good and Gone* suggested that the band had the required grit to go places. The cover of *Gun-Shy* may be off-target, but don't you believe it, the Screaming Blue Messiahs have it fixed so's they can't miss.

George Kay

Joe Jackson Big World A&M

Joe Jackson's work nearly always shows intelligence. It sometimes also shows considerable talent. Consider *Big World*.

For a start it's got a smart concept: a collection of songs set in (and once or twice influenced by) various areas of the globe. There's an overall theme of internationalism, rather than simply travel, which is carried through to a lyric booklet in five languages.

Another simple and sensible approach involves the album's length at three sides. After all, why not release more than two sides if you've got the material and why go to a double album if that would mean padding?

But most intelligent of all is the recording technique. Jackson has long been critical of the artificiality of much modern record production — check the last album's sleeve notes for example — while at the same time respecting the greater accuracy of current technology. Hence *Big World* was recorded live in (silent) concert, direct to two-track digital master without subsequent mixing or overdubs. So what we hear stands exposed in both unadorned fidelity and optimum clarity. If only some other big recording names were willing to risk themselves in the same way.

Okay, so much for the intelligence, how about the talent? Well, the four-piece band acquits itself with exemplary skill. Also, while not forsaking the piano, Jackson has generally returned to a guitar-centred sound. Unfortunately however, his voice is laid bare in all its potential nasal yowling. A vocal

technique which was once appropriate to the post-punk aggression of his early work is often now winningly inadequate for much of his more ambitious recent writing. There are a few tracks here I'd like re-recorded with another singer.

Of greater concern is the paucity of really memorable songs. Jackson used to write superbly catchy tunes with words that made serious points via wittily described scenarios. Here we're mostly given strained or mundane melodies with lyrics that are merely earnest. Not always though. There's a handful of successful tracks — but only enough for one side, not three. All of which, on balancing the evidence of Joe Jackson's intelligence with his talent, means *Big World* is an album I generally admire but only occasionally enjoy.

Peter Thomson

Lynyrd Skynyrd Gold and Platinum MCA

Until their tragic demise in 1977, Skynyrd were probably the hottest band in the States at that time. After a string of gold and platinum albums, the band were embarking on their in-aply titled *Street Survivors* tour until a few trees got in the way of their low flying plane, paying the ultimate price for their wreckless rock-'n'-roll lifestyle. Believe me, the stories are true — I met a survivor.

Who knows where they'd be today. With all their internal feudin' and a fightin', it's doubtful if they'd still be the force to be reckoned with, if they were still intact that is. The splinter groups that evolved later weren't a patch on the original, and although Ronnie Van Zandt's brothers tried to keep up the cause with 38 Special and the Donnie Van Zandt Band, they weren't a patch on their brother.

What we've got left is a legacy in the form of this album, probably passe to a true Skynyrd fan, but essential to anyone who might've missed them at the time, and for me a lot of good memories, especially the night I saw them blow Golden Earring off the stage in London on their first European tour. I'll never forget that. Skynyrd, RIP.

Greg Cobb

STING! Bring on the Night

M. le Sting et les Tortues Bleues

LIVE DOUBLE ALBUM

AM RECORDS

FESTIVAL

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PAUL SIMON Graceland



PAUL SIMON Graceland

With 'Graceland', Paul Simon takes his topical storytelling writing into three distinct styles — South African, Cajun and Tex-Mex. Other ingredients in this rich mix include an African choir, Los Lobos, Everly Bros, Linda Ronstadt and three South African groups. A remarkable return to vinyl by a true master.



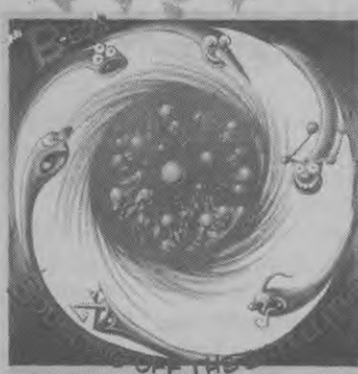
CHRIS THOMPSON The High Cost of Living

Chris Thompson is the New Zealander known as lead vocalist Manfred Mann's Earthband and for his own band, Night. Thompson finished full-time with Manfred Mann in 1979 but continues to sing on LPs and tour. This solo LP features his brassy remake of the Motors' 'Love and Loneliness', reflective ballads and powerful rockers.



EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL Baby, The Stars Shine Bright

This the third LP by Tracey Thorne and Ben Watt is produced by Mike Hedges (Cure, Siouxsie). Recorded at London's Abbey Road Studio this new LP features a 40-piece orchestra and 8-voice vocal choir.



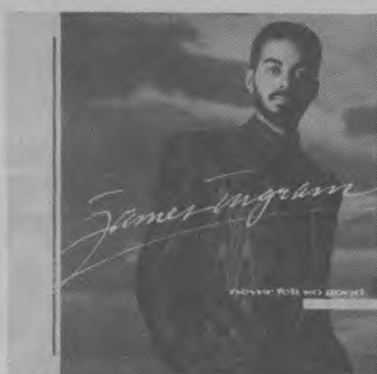
THE B-52's Bouncing Off the Satellites

This album features all five of the original B52's and is dedicated to the memory of guitarist Ricky Wilson. The first single is dance sure-shot 'Summer of Love' and likely follow-up is warped sequel to 'Girl from Ipanema' called 'Girl from Ipanema Goes to Greenland'. As wacky, fresh and unique as ever!



RIC OCASEK This Side of Paradise

Ric continues to develop his solo niche independent of the Cars' distinctive sound. Collaborators such as Billy Idol guitarist Steve Stevens, Tom Verlaine, members of Cars and producer Chris Hughes (Tears For Fears) all contribute muscle to Ric Ocasek's distinctive lyrical and vocal style.



JAMES INGRAM Never Felt So Good

At last the follow-up to his excellent debut LP. James Ingram is one of the great voices in contemporary music, groomed by Quincy Jones' Quest label, here Ingram steps out into funky mid-tempo 'Always' and classic ballads with the appeal of his transcendent hit 'Ya Mo B There'.

Other new albums to look out for: in the METAL arena, look for new **Triumph** LP 'The Sport of Kings', **Metallica** 'Ride the Lightning'.



AL JARREAU L is for Lover

This adventurous collaboration with producer Nile Rodgers finds Jarreau singing in his classic jazz style and in an R&B groove with material as diverse as his own originals and even a track written by Scritti Politti. Title track is first hit single.

There are several important film soundtrack LPs on release — **Psycho 3**, **Coalminer's Daughter** (Sissy Spacek), **American**



BODEANS Love & Hope & Sex & Dreams

Another wonderful album from Los Angeles indie Slash Records. Produced by T-Bone Burnett, this LP showcases the writing of Bodeans' Llanas and Neumann, Milwaukee's new pop ambassadors. They write irresistible pop/rock tunes, one after another. Don't miss it!

Anthem (with **Andy Taylor** hit 'Take It Easy' plus tracks by INXS, Stevie Nicks, Mr Mister), and **Stand By Me**.



CHICAGO 18

On this their third Warner Bros album, once again David Foster produces but soloing bassist Peter Cetera is replaced by Jason Scheff. One of the 10 originals is an update of their 1970 hit '25 or 6 to 4'. It's a smash hit once again!



ALPHAVILLE Afternoons in Utopia

This Berlin based trio is releasing its second LP, following-up their debut 'Forever Young'. Founding members Gold & Lloyd have been joined by new recruit Ricky Echolette. More entrancing, sophisticated pop/rock including single 'Dance With Me'.

New acts on release: Aussies **Huxton** **Creepers** with '12 Days to Paris', **Peter Case** with self-titled debut on Geffen Records.