

**Soluble Fish
Sound Cues
South Indies**

Bill and Carol Direen's collaborations date back as far as the sublime 'Feast of Frogs,' a 7" EP of songs by the French cabaret singer Boris Vian — the brilliant 'M Le President,' 'Hurt Me, Johnny,' know them, love them ...

Sound Cues is a far different proposition to that record. This time we are offered an aural montage — soundtrack, I think, for a new audio-visual presentation by the Builders/Soluble Fish Ensemble. It opens with 'How Not to Spend All Your Money by Saturday Night,' Carol's warm Scottish lilt intoning a surreal poem, setting the mood. These are further poetic interludes, short and long, from both of the duo, including 'Crambo's Song' (published in *Three Farces* by South Indies). Oddball pop sticks its nose in with 'Caroline Bay,' 'Iceberg' and 'What a Hoombah,' and atmospheric interludes — acoustic guitar and woodwind, synthesiser and percussion — appear throughout, including 'Passengers of Change,' reflecting on the transient nature of life, "births deaths and marriages / passengers of change."

But though I'm sure the complete presentation of the work would be a challenging experience on its own, *Sound Cues* itself can be rewarding, but not challenging. It is an intelligent (if esoteric ...) and entertaining record but does not really rise to making demands of the listener. When the Direens can extend their art to encompass *that*, they will make a record that will win me over fully. Till then, I'll listen and wait.

Paul McKessar

**Various
The House Sound of Chicago
London**

House music is the gay black music from Chicago which originated mostly from a club called the Warehouse. It blends the speed of gay hi-energy with the techniques of modern DJing, and even with the benefits of studio recording, these tracks betray their roots on the turntable and mixing desk. A very fast, generally 120 bpm rhythm will bring in a boogie woogie piano, and an old Isaac Hayes' number 'I Can't Turn Around' will create a House standard.

Farley Jackmaster Funk's 'Love Can't Turn Around' is the outcome, aside from numerous other House versions, and while the lyrics aren't profound, the singer's rather suggestive crys give you some idea of what the title is eluding to, and his rather sordid preferences.

Where House succeeds is that it's easy to dance to, and though I can't see myself "jacking" on the dancefloor, it appears to be very popular with the post-pubescent and the more athletic types. Steve Silk Hurley's 'Jack Your Body' has one of the most recognisable basslines of recent times, and 'Move Your Body: House Anthem' is equally good.

House is going to keep the gay clubs fuelled for some years, but in the real world it's like a hybrid that can't reproduce. That's almost an anomaly for a music that is so subtly sexual, but it's not going to be influential on pop or black music like Go-Go was, because it's only a culmination of 15 years of hi-energy.

Peter Grace

**? Fog
Robert the Record
Jayrem**

I got a surprise with this one from Auckland's premier underground outfit, ? Fog. This debut album, though full of obvious influences, is controlled and far from rough, but not a lot of fun.

Side one's 'Brian' especially references the first two Public Image LPs — atonal Lydon-style vocals and booming basslines muffling everything else. The "Mad Kiwi Ranter" (uggh! moniker) David Eggleton lets rip on side two's 'Supermarket,' the best song, bombarding the listener with consumerist images — a theme further explored in the lesser 'Kleenaks,' musically uninspiring.

The rest of the lyrical concerns appear familiar enough — vegetarianism, nuclear annihilation and personal alienation, and though thwarted by ? Fog's own limited musical vision and lack of tangible aggression, *Robert the Record* is a fair statement of intent.

Paul McKessar

**Various
What is this Place?
Ima Hitt**

What is this Place? is Ima Hitt's first vinyl release. Previously distributing only tapes, this compilation of Taranaki bands from the last couple of years marks a bold step forward for the small New Plymouth label. The New Plymouth scene is reportedly a lowkey one, but going by the 11 bands represented here, it must be thriving relatively well ...

Music and recording quality varies — three of the bands recorded "properly" in studios, but interestingly the climactic contribution was not — Sticky Filth's '600 Witches' nevertheless is a fair recording of a powerful, brooding song. Other highlights include Gulag's 'Sad Melody' and the song from Loving Homes for Rotting Gnomes, 'Reptile.' Oddities include the strange similarity (glaring!) between the Unix track 'Standing By a Beach' and Anthem's 'Hands,' but luckily they're separated by the Bananamen's 'Big Poppa' — saves the day!

Paul McKessar

On Tape

**Biding Our Time
(Fallsafe)**

An ambitious compilation featuring 22 bands, mostly from Christchurch but also including such luminaries from the North as Childrens Hour, the Birdsnest Roys and Nocturnal Projections, plus Dunedinites the Stones, Double Happys, and the Chills. Mostly live recordings, and as such, the quality varies greatly, with the Jean-Paul Sartre Experience's close attention to live sound proving worthwhile with 'Flex Thyself.' Newer Christchurch bands like Mea Culpa get to share the limelight with old hands the Desperate Tricycles (who? — they play 'If Only I Could Die' ... sound familiar?) and the Double Happys' 'Beer Cans on the Ground.' Variety being the spice of life, this *surely* is interesting. (Fallsafe, P O Box 3003, Christchurch)

Paul McKessar

COURTNEY PINE "Journey To The Urge Within"



On album & tape

... this ain't ordinary

THE AUTHENTIC TIMEX SOCIAL CLUB

"Mixed Up World
on 7" & 12"



through FESTIVAL

Accept no imitations