

Records

Ruby Turner Women Hold Up Half the Sky Jive

Ruby Turner's a new name to most of us. Last year's single 'If You're Ready (Come Go With Me),' an upbeat version of the Staple Singers' classic, was the first thing to register here, and now the catchy follow-up 'Bye Baby' is gaining steady airplay.

The good news is that her debut album fulfills the promise of those two singles — *Women Hold Up Half the Sky* is one of the most consistently listenable records to arrive in some time. A variety of production teams (six in total, including Billy Ocean, Minneapolis-based Monte Moir and Womack & Womack) don't disrupt Ruby Turner's consistently mellow but funky approach.

Ironically, while the styling is all-American and reminiscent, say, of Randy Crawford, Ruby Turner is British. Based in Birmingham, she arrived in the UK at the age of nine and in her career has worked with

UB40, Bryan Ferry and Culture Club.

Turner's strong but understated voice is up to a range of tasks — from her joyous approach to 'Come Go With Me' to the soulful requirements of 'A Woman Left Lonely,' and she can even rescue the high-class schlock like 'Only Women Bleed' that threatens to bog down side two.

There's no genre busting going on here, no hacking at the frontiers, but Ruby Turner's quiet assurance and easy delivery make this one of the best soft soul LPs to come along since the first Womack & Womack album.

Alastair Dougal

Sticks & Shanty Jah Magic Jayrem Smiley Culture The Original Serengeti

Original, contemporary indigenous music is slowly dragging itself into the 1980s, thanks largely to the influence of Robert Nesta Marley. His sound is relected in all local reggae groups, Wellington's Sticks & Shanty being no exception.

There's nothing startlingly in-

novative in *Jah Magic*. The strengths of this nine-piece group, at least half of whose members are related, lie in their voices and melodies. 'Courthouse' and 'Row Papa Row' show some promising songwriting talent which will hopefully be borne out in the follow-up album, promised for later this year.

On the minus side, the other pervasive influence on local musicians, Jimi Hendrix, frequently manifests itself in guitar solos which are both dated and excessive. A stronger keyboard sound would help too, along with lyrics which are more of a statement and less of a cliché.

Smiley Culture was the first of the British mike chanters, or MCs, to crack the charts. 'Cockney Translation' and 'Police Officer' are standards of the MC genre, with witty and topical lyrics, often chanted at breathless speed. It's hard to tire of Smiley's stories and his most recent works show no sign that he's running out of ideas.

The Original includes the two previously-mentioned tracks, plus four more, all with extended dance mixes. Fun and games from a court jester who sometimes wears a frown behind his smile. Slam bam!

If you can't find these records in

your local store, write to Jayrem Records, P.O. Box 3054, Wellington.

Duncan Campbell

Merle Haggard Out Among the Stars CBS Merle Haggard I Love Country Epic

Merle sings songs that can rip your heart out, from the storyteller tradition of Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams, stuff dripping with the joys and sorrows of everyday life.

On the '86 release *Out Among the Stars* there is a wonder of wonders called 'My Life's Been Around' — a man looks back and reviews his past ("the world sure looked lonely"); the way he sings it, it's like he's on his way to the electric chair. It carries the weight of the world in its strange and weary delivery. The electric chair bit may not be so far-fetched, for in 1957, while Haggard was serving a one-to-ten for attempted burglary, he did a stretch a few cells away from poor old Caryl Chessman.

Haggard, like George Jones, is a master ballad singer. The version

of 'Almost Persuaded' is a beauty, especially when there's just voice and violins. There's not much to get happy about, but 'Pennies from Heaven' has a nice dixieland feel, but the pathos remains.

The *I Love Country* collection has most of the hits from the time he signed with Epic in the late 70s, a bit more fun here with the sexy 'Let's Chase Each Other Around the Room' and 'I Always Get Lucky with You.' It seems a cliché when you describe country as working class laments, but things like 'Bigotry' and 'Are the Good Times Really Over' hit the nerves of working people everywhere.

Both albums are good additions to a country collection, but try to get the earlier stuff available on the *Branded Man* collection and the glorious *Gin and Misery* album.

Kerry Buchanan

The Saints Monkey Puzzle Jayrem

Chris Bailey returned to Australia in 1979 after the breakup of the original Saints, pissed around for a year and ended up with this band — they played pub-rock, tight as a duck's arse, and good.

This is the Saints in between the glorious punk-edged R&B of the first three albums and the mature rock of *All Fools Day*. It's a raw and energetic good time, containing two bona-fide classics, 'In the Mirror' and 'Always, Always,' a rockin' out finale of 'Dizzy Miss Lizzy' and only really marred by a *non*-production that's rivalled only by the Gun Club's awesome *Miami* ...

Though not *all* essential, this stays in my collection on the strength of the two aforementioned songs, and I offer (yet again) hearty thanks to Jayrem for bringing us more of the best of Australian independent releases. Support them — buy their product.

Paul McKessar

Tesla Mechanical Resonance (WEA)

Electric energy performed in a fairly typical metal style with a lot of early 70s rock influence evident. Although they may not have much originality, the Sacramento quintet Tesla have still done pretty well for a debut recording and it's better than many other things around at them moment. GD



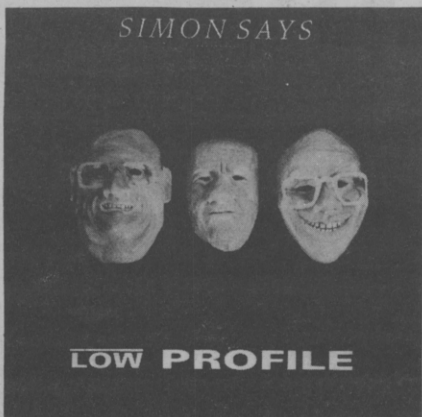
PO BOX 3054 • WELLINGTON • NEW ZEALAND

THE JAYREM RECORDS COUNTDOWN

THIS MONTH
LAST MONTH

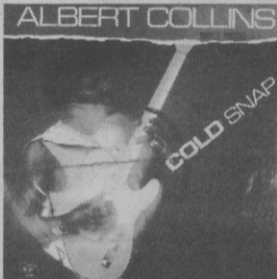
1	NEW	Bedtime for Democracy Dead Kennedy's	AIM 1012
2	2	He Waiata Mot Te Iwi Aotearoa	JAY-327 TC-JAY-327
3	1	Putty In Her Hands Trick Of The Light	JAY-140
4	8	Jah Magic Sticks & Shanty	JAY-326 TC-JAY-326
5	4	Mary Yandall/Rodger Fox Mary Yandall & Rodger Fox	CIRCULAR-11 TC-CIRC-11
6	11	No More War Dread Beat & Blood	JAY-141 TC-JAY-141
7	NEW	Simon Says Low Profile	FR-5
8	5	Make Room Luke Hurley	JAY-324 TC-JAY-324
9	18	The Original Smiley Culture Smiley Culture	GETI-12 TC-GETI-12
10	-	The Monkey Puzzle The Saints	YPRX-1806
11	19	Buckle In The Rail Chad's Tree	FINE-1
12	3	Reggae Blasters Vol. 2 Various Artists	GETI-11 TC-GETI-11
13	21	The Immigrant Tango James Griffin & The Subterraneans	CHASE-2
14	15	Destroy Dull-City Psychotic Turnbuckles	RAT-1201
15	NEW	The Mystery Unfolds Mutabaruka	TC-RRS-007
16	12	Top Of The Town Screaming Tribesmen	RAT-1202
17	17	Weird Culture, Weird Custom National Student Radio Compilation	NSR-001 TC-NSR-001
18	NEW	Tension Pablo Moses	TC-RRS-008
19	7	Attack From Down Unda Various NZ Heavy Metal — Import	RRLP-103 RRLC-103
20	6	Robert The Record ?Fog City Enterprises	ROBERT 1/500

AVAILABLE NOW



ADVERTISEMENT/

BLUES/FOLK/ROCK/AFRICAN/JAZZ PROTEST/COUNTRY/SOUNDTRACK New from Ode Records



ALBERT COLLINS:
Cold Snap



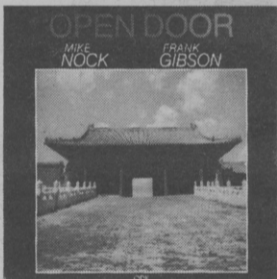
LONNIE MACK:
Second Sight



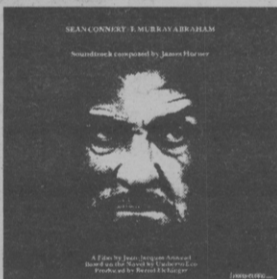
LIL' ED & THE BLUES
IMPERIALS:
Rough Housin'



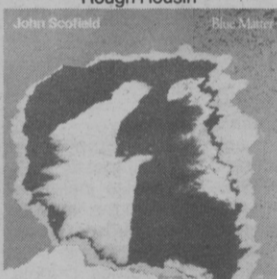
DELBERT MCCLINTON:
Honky Tonkin'



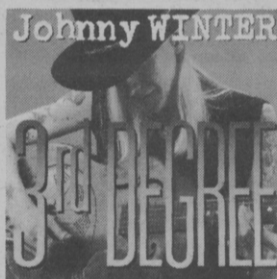
MIKE NOCK & FRANK
GIBSON: Open Door



THE NAME OF THE
ROSE: Soundtrack



JOHN SCOFIELD:
Blue Matter



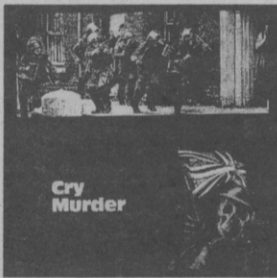
JOHNNY WINTER:
3rd Degree



SOWETO STREET
MUSIC Vol.1



SOWETO STREET
MUSIC Vol.2



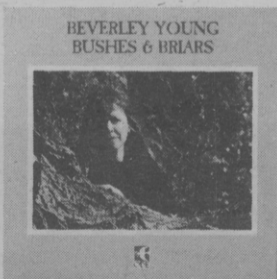
CRY MURDER



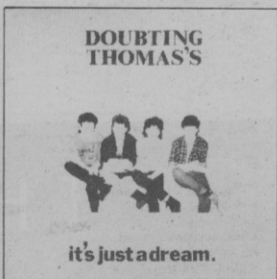
DOCTOR JOHN: Doctor
John's Gumbo



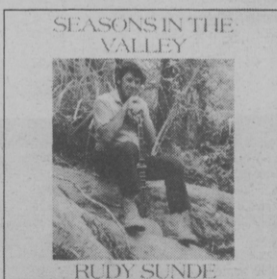
OTIS MACE & THE
PSYCHIC PET HEALERS:
Little Critters



BEVERLY YOUNG:
Bushes & Briars



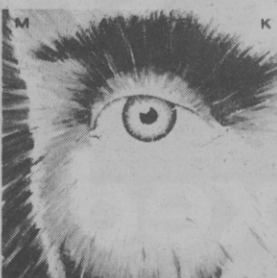
DOUBTING THOMAS'S:
It's Just A Dream



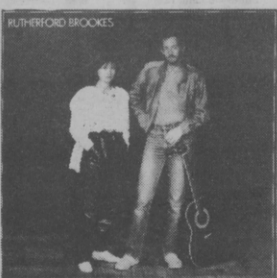
RUDY SUNDE: Seasons In
The Valley



BRIAN SMITH



MASK



RUTHERFORD
BROOKES



BARRICADES



ODE RECORD COMPANY LTD
P.O. Box 1535
Auckland,
New Zealand