

Shake Summation

Herbs
'Sensitive to a Smile' (Warrior 7")

Classy seductive soul rather than the Pacific sound of old. As good as any of the soft soul that has dominated our Top 20 recently. With an acoustic piano to the fore, a great melody, and restrained delivery building to a passionate climax. Excellent — listen for it on a jukebox near you. 'Station of Love' is a catchy piece of light reggae (a singalong for children?) celebrating the reggae train. The album should be a crowd pleaser.

Murder Inc.
'Carbine' (Rational 12")

Recorded live at Kent House with no overdubs, and the result is a consistent, fast, furious and murky EP that has an uncompromising "take us or leave us" tone to it. 'Death and Resurrection Show' is the pick, dark like the Velvets. Mark Brooks plays an excellent bass but his affected tough guy vocal is off-putting. This EP is more effective than the Murders live — you can't see the posing —

but two songs woulda been quite enough.

Chris Bourke

Simon Vita 'Rites of Spring'
c/w Michael Dwyer 'Rubber Necking' (F Star 7")

Two interesting side projects from the prolific Wasp Factory gang. Both work over fairly similar territory, with 'Rites of Spring' being just as "rubbery" as the catchy but inane 'Rubber Necking', which isn't quite enough to work well, whereas Martin Kirk gets to provide a lot more instrumentation on the other side, and Ross Revington lets his double bass go "bo-ing!" circa '84 Cure. \$4.99 from 110 Stout St, Gisborne.

Putty in Her Hands
'Trick of the Light' (Jayrem 12")

Two Wellington-based women with high-grade classical and jazz credentials make up Putty in Her Hands. Charlotte Yates and Christine Jeffs create warm pop music with the accent on mood, aided by Allison Wallace's violin, Debbie Frame on sax and Tim Hunt on drums. Collecting odd images along the way, searching tongue-in-cheek for love, the words help build the ambience, whilst the sax drives songs like 'Walk With My Dreams' right into a good groove, with 'Mess It Up' being the most bouyant of a hearty quintet of songs (including

Bowie's 'Repetition'), recorded nice and up-front at Frontier. A fine, bright debut.

The Max Block
(Flying Nun 12")

These six songs were recorded at Nightshift in October last year, the Max Block having emerged from the ruins of sonic terrorists Scorched Earth Policy in about July — a promising pedigree The Max Block's best songs, 'Black Fish' and 'Sonic Blur', are full of warped fun. When they thrash, they thrash (Burn David Burn) and when they get dense ... well, you try listening to 'Psychic Discharge'. Though I like this, the production is not up to the standard of SEP's *Going Through a Hole*, and I'll be looking for something really exciting on the Max Block's next effort.

Paul McKessar

On Tape

Ballon D'Essai
RIP (Failsafe)

Ahh ... Ballon D'artwork — crazy cartoons, lots of 'em — memories ... This comes wrapped in a small poster thing, letting you know about the chaos contained within. This is a compilation well worth listening to, a bold experiment, maybe a bit dated but well-

recorded, and if Bauhaus hadn't taken themselves so seriously, they could've been Ballon D'Essai, and if Ballon D'Essai had been that famous. The timeless 'Crash, Crash' exercises in shrieking. Sadly lost — best tape buy this month. (From Failsafe, P O Box 3003, Christchurch)

Sallywag (Fingers) Boelee

Greg Boelee, leading Three Leaning Man, gives us this wholly self-indulgent, often quite neat, tape. Includes 'A Poem of Boyish Dreams', all about the convict's drill, 'Genesis Meets AC/DC', which sounds just like the Residents doing 'Land of a Thousand Dances', horrible messy bits and nice acoustic bits, and a good fun info sheet. The next one, *Songs for My Wife's Friends*, sounds promising — 20 nasty toenail curlers on the subject of Sallywag's wife's friends! (From 3/18 Douglas St, Palmerston North)

Henry the International Atlas
Antidote

Sorry Henry, but I lost your tape a couple of times in house moves ... never mind! Refound and reviewed: Nearly a full 90 minutes of slices of life with a surrealistic bent, tableaux played out on synthesiser, tape-recorder, etc ... Mournfully slow tapeloops — "I stand behind my husband, encourage him whenever I can" — with sweeps of crackling noise. Occasionally awkward ('Rabid'),

but regrettably only occasionally funny ('Compost'). Where's yer humour, Henry? (From 6 Montague St, Lower Hutt)

The Glass/Skank Attack
Live

The Glass, now-defunct, play tight'n'hard, sort of heart-warming rock and roll. They say this was recorded at their peak, live in mid-85, and they could be right — ain't bad.

I think Skank Attack have some vinyl out now, probably worth checking out — this side's an inferior recording though, from August last year. They play straight-ahead stuff, 'In Time/Out of Time' and 'The Knife Cuts' being obvious hit-picks — the latter proving that if they wanted to, Skank Attack could make your ears bleed. Yum. (From 36 Miro St, Wellington)

Various
Suicide City

Hamilton's fledgling "underground" scene is represented by 13 bands/individuals on *Suicide City*. Main problem though for these and the seven others credited as being "active in 1986" would seem to be the lack of viable venues. Recording quality too lags far behind the output of places like Gisborne, Palmerston North and New Plymouth. But it has enough interesting things on it — straight ahead garage grunge through

thrash and "industrial" (featuring prominently) to medieval chants — to make you wonder why they all wanna die ... or is it just another Doctors of Madness revival? (\$7 from Suicide, 10 Michael Ave, Hamilton)

Jungle Mice

Jungle Mice don't deviate from their basic rock and roll/slightly rockabilly feel anywhere on this tape. Clear recording at the Cricketers by Mark Ingram, with Gerry Moran's vocals and good playing standing out in the Jungle Mice's fairly safe arrangements, limited by the three-piece format. It's all quite good, 'Pervert Song' being the closest they come to a truly inspired moment. (\$8 from Real Groovy or 178 Tasman St, Wellington).

Paul McKessar

Hammerack

Hard Rock Fever (Grunt)

Emerging from Christchurch, Hammerack have released their debut recording on cassette only. Their songwriting is along very typical heavy metal lines, but for NZ standards is quite impressive, especially the guitar work from Jamie Dickson. Definitely a Kiwi rock band to look out for as they develop their own sound further. Write Grunt Records, P O Box 291, Timaru. GD

The triffids present a Woolshed recording

New Album and Tape

IN THE PINES



As every schoolchild knows, Australia's noblest, The Triffids, chose to retreat to the deserts of their homeland this summer, ensconce themselves in a shed full of sheep-shearing equipment, and record lots of songs to see what would happen.

The result is 'In The Pines', and it's entirely remarkable.

... 'In The Pines' is the best use of a holiday I have heard in years. Christ knows what they're like when they're working ...

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