

# RECORDS

## The Del Fuegos Stand Up Slash

The Del Fuegos make a beat record in the sense of Ginsberg and Kerouac, so it's on the road with the Dels and it's no easy ride.

World weary and ready for the count, America's sons view things through a glass darkly, hanging around as Ginsberg in *Howl* says, "listening to the terror through the wall." American angst in full throttle on 'Long Slide (for an out)' and getting the lowdown on life on 'He Had a Lot to Drink Today.'

The music is real downtown Memphis, deep Southern rhythms with a touch of Willie Mitchell's early 70s production sound. The lead track 'Wear it Like a Cape' has a nice church sound with the black backing chorus, and Mitchell Froom's airy production. There's no real rockers as such, except for 'I Can't Take this Place,' which has, dare I say, a Springsteen feel. But the major comparison is with the Stones' *Exile on Main Street* if only in the way that after you've played it, you feel like you've been swimming in a swamp.

You may feel dirty but your soul has been cleansed.  
**Kerry Buchanan**

## Smokey Robinson One Heartbeat Motown

One of the true geniuses of soul, not only possessed with a voice full of fragile beauty, but symbolic of a generation. Motown defined popular music in the 60s, slick black R&B that broke hearts and built bank balances. Smokey was Mr Motown.

In the 80s Motown has lost the crown to younger contenders, but at times the magic returns. As in this album where the Robinson voice still amazes, hardly definable, more like an abstract sensation, that exists beyond any analysis.

Songs like 'Juust to See Her' are like emotional bullets, right on target. It's the way he floats the melody around the rhythm, like in 'Why Do Happy Memories Hurt So Bad' — something that only a few can achieve with any success.

Sad, but never depressing songs about love, lust and crazy love, as in 'Keep Me' — "You're not a cell, oh no / but a prisoner am I." There's a romanticism working here that strikes at the heart of emotion.

As the ABC hit says, "When Smokey sings, I can hear violins." The

whole album sure strums at the heart strings and that can't be a bad thing.  
**Kerry Buchanan**

## Carmel The Falling London

Carmel is primarily an English trio of bassist, percussionist and the eponymous female singer. On this album they are supplemented by at least another three, and at times up to nine, additional musicians. The nine tracks, nearly all self-written, have a distinctly British feeling for the revival of interest in traditional soul and jazz-influenced cool. There's not a guitar in earshot, the keyboards are either acoustic piano or Hammond organ, and the rhythm team consists of double bass, unprocessed drums and congas.

The final cut, 'Sally' provides the best example of soulful barnstorming, however most tracks move at slow or medium pace, employing spacious arrangements with the three essential Carmelites to the fore. If the songs are sometimes repetitive they're all at least melodic and beautifully executed. Bass and percussion get some pulsating patterns going; check 'Sticks and Stones' for example.

The boldest arrangement however belongs to their (solitary cover) version of Randy Newman's 'Mama Told

Me Not to Come.' Almost totally dispensing with the refrain — itself the hook for Three Dog Night's 1970 hit — Carmel restructure the piece as brooding voodoo and add the frisson of snake-charming saxophone.

Such a willingness to not adopt established musical styles but to radically play around with them indicates that Carmel deserve more than to be merely the next Sade.

**Peter Thomson**

## The Stems At First Sight/Violets are Blue White Label

An Australian band from Perth, the Stems provide us with a sound full of 60s influences, from the pop psychedelia of the Byrds to the rock edges of the Buffalo Springfield. One gets the feeling that this band is flirting with the glory it could cover itself with — perhaps an EP would have been a more appropriate vehicle for this music.

Standout tracks include 'At First Sight,' with its charming harmonies and guitar lines. With this song first up, I thought this album would be a winner. But no — the wallpaper music had to be sifted through to find the other highlights. 'Mr Misery' with its Stones feel is great, as is 'For Always' — a fine rolling song with its undercutting guitar and swaying organ. An-

other favourite would have to be 'Can't Forget that Girl,' although it is an unashamed copy of the Monkees' 'Daydream Believer.'

Apart from these tracks there is danceable music but little else. For me the 60s didn't just stop at being upbeat, uptempo rock and roll riffs — they went a bit further than that.

**Tim Byrne**

## Thin Red Line Lie of the Land Ode

Thin Red Line are a band from Palmerston North. Their previous EPs have been an interesting mix of socially conscious music exploring community themes. *Lie of the Land* finds them continuing this role — it's an album with both unity and continuity. TRL have matured their sound and utilised the studio to better effect than previous offerings.

All of the songs are political — love is the land, women are the balance and the treaty is a fraud. Musically it isn't an album to drop acid to: some of it's damned frightening but then again, so is it out there. This album dares to ask us about our collective fate; what is there to give our children, and yes, this is our history. 'Trick or Treaty' is a standout, with its stunny metallic intro into the soft lament of this land's lie. 'Newsprint' explores themes familiar to many of us: the in-

justice of the court system, society's white male dominance. The folkie strains of 'Potiki' offer audio relief from the wastelands but as soon as the "dollarman" appears it is strident, physical music.

An album not for the fainthearted, nor for those who are, and will forever remain, right.

**Tim Byrne**

## This Mortal Coil Filigree & Shadow (4AD)

Simon Raymonde and company return with more of the surreal and luxurious stuff that put This Mortal Coil's earlier 'Song to the Siren' single high in the UK independent charts for nearly a year. TMC's *Filigree & Shadow*, a double album, first strikes you as incredibly consistent, and then, as repetitive. Its lush instrumentals ('Inch Blue,' 'Tears') are strong and touching but the lyrics are often ridiculously wet. Able covers reveal, ironically, that the TMC sound is a blanket style which can be applied to almost anything, although only the most cynical could ignore their superb version of David Byrne's 'Drugs' or Van Morrison's 'Come Here My Love.' TMC are a worthy and adventurous collective of musicians and not to be underestimated (or overestimated; neither they nor the Cocteau are the "voice of God") — but it's still too early in the game for a double album.

CT



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## THE JAYREM RECORDS COUNTDOWN

THIS  
MONTH

LAST  
MONTH

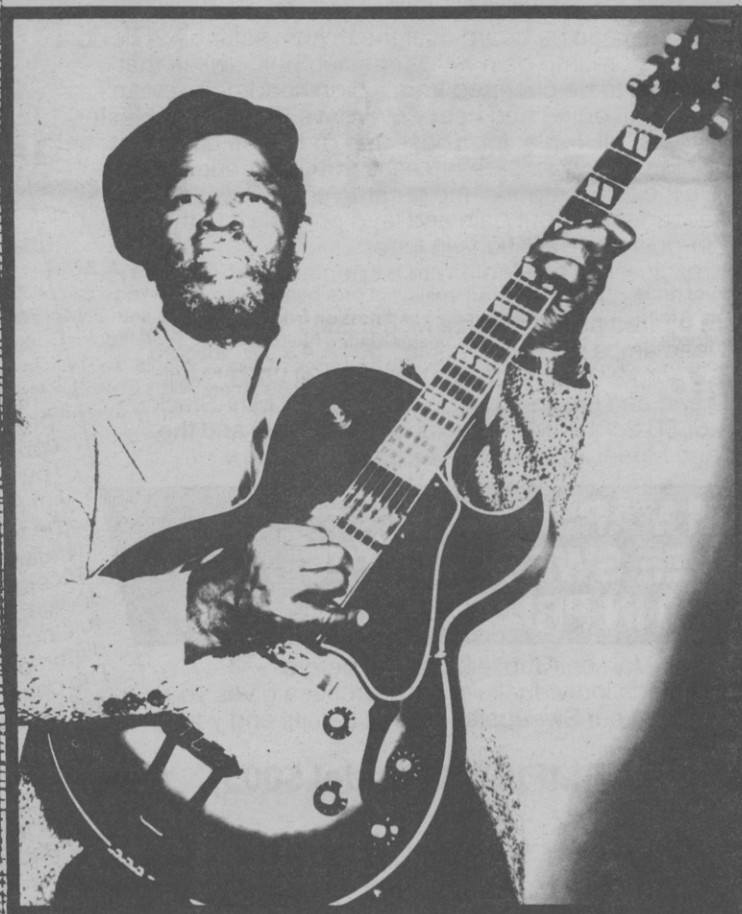
1	NEW	The Harder The Edge The Rocka The Roll ... Various Artists	WILD-XXX
2	1	Black Woman Judy Mowatt	GETI-13
3	4	Revolution Aotearoa	TC-GETI-13 JAY-730
4	2	Transmission Flesh D Vice	TC-JAY-730 FDV-731
5	NEW	Nowhere Fast Number Nine	JAY-329
6	7	Trick Of The Light Putty in Her Hands	JAY-140
7	18	Jerusalem Alpha Blondy & the Wailers	TC-RRS-009
8	NEW	Rootsman Skanking Bunny Wailer	TC-RC-7
9	3	Night of a Thousand Candles The Men They Couldn't Hang	JAY-328 TC-JAY-328
10	15	Hold Out My Love To You Max Romeo with Keith Richards	TC-RRS-012
11	24	Raw Material UK Subs IMPORT	KILP-2001
12	NEW	All Day All Night Black Roots	NRCT-01 TC-NRCT-01
13	8	Jah Magic Sticks & Shanty	JAY-326 TC-JAY-326
14	17	Reggae Street The Mighty Diamonds	TC-RRS-010
15	6	Bedtime For Democracy Dead Kennedys	AIM-1012 TC-AIM-1012
16	NEW	The Ramones The Ramones	AIM-1015 TC-AIM-1015
17	9	He Waiata Mo Te Iwi Aotearoa	JAY-327 TC-JAY-327
18	27	Remember When The Platters	AIM-1026 TC-AIM-1026
19	NEW	Elephunkin' Low Profile	FR-6 FMC-6
20	13	No More War Dread Beat & Blood	JAY-141 TC-JAY-141

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