

# TOM WAITS

RAINVILLE. HARDLY EVER DID THOUGH, RAIN THAT IS. IT WAS NOWHERE. RAILROAD TRACKS RAN UP THE BACK OF THE STATE LIKE STITCHES. TELEPHONE LINES SLASHED THE ORANGE DAWN LIKE A WRECKED SHIP'S RIGGING ... AND WHEN IT RAINED THE WHOLE TOWN WENT MAD. DOGS RAN WILD IN THE STREETS. FRANK WAS SQUEEZED BETWEEN SCRAP IRON PLACES AND RADIATOR REPAIR SHOPS ... RAINVILLE, GOOD PLACE TO DREAM YOURSELF AWAY FROM. WHEN THE TRAINS THUNDERED PAST THE BACKYARD FENCE, BOUND FOR OXNARD, LOMPOC, GILA BEND, STANFIELD AND PARTS SOUTH WHERE THE WIND BLEW BIG, FRANK WOULD COUNT THE CARS AND MAKE A WISH JUST LIKE HE DID WHEN HE WAS A KID ... AT LEAST SOMETHING WAS GETTING OUT OF TOWN ALIVE ... ONE MOONLIT NIGHT FRANK PACKED UP HIS ACCORDION AND SAID BLOW WIND BLOW WHEREVER YOU MAY GO ... CAUSE I'M GOING STRAIGHT TO THE TOP ... UP WHERE THE AIR IS FRESH AND CLEAN.



SWORDFISHTROMBONES ...  
RAIN DOGS ...

FRANKS WILD YEARS  
THE NEW ALBUM



## RECORDS

Sherrick  
Warners

A new soul boy in town, and he's looking like he owns it. The cover has the "stare," eyes fixed right at you, the reverse shot has him walking around a forest with a silk shirt and his chest puffed out. Not exactly a natural look, but a carefully mannered "Hey, baby, I'm so damn hot I'll burn the pants off you." Check out the armpit shot on the inner sleeve, a first for a soul album. But the sexual arrogance of the image and all the other pretensions disappear when you hear the purity of the voice, when you get into the groove.

Take 'Baby I'm For Real,' written by Marvin Gaye and his wife Anna for Motown band the Originals, No 1 on the soul charts for 1969. This is a great interpretation of that classic soul sound, with lots of emotion simply and beautifully expressed.

Also 'Lady You Are,' apart from the dubious talking bit with, "We've become one mind, one heart beating with the rhythm of love ..." Okay, if you say so. Like that's a little schmaltzy, but when the chorus comes in, all is forgiven.

When we talk about contemporary soul singers, the name Luther Vandross becomes the standard everyone gets compare to, and sure

stuff like 'Do You Baby' and 'Let's Be Lovers' has that upbeat Vandross groove. But Sherrick has his own approach to things, the vocal style comes from the grand tradition but is used in an original way, like the single 'Just Call,' and the ballad 'All Because of You.'

One side is described as "Hits," the other "Mo' Hits," and I won't disagree with that. In fact I like this better than Alexander O'Neal's *Hearsay* (yeah, I know that's sacrilege), and there's gonna be plenty more hits from Mr Sherrick to come.

Kerry Buchanan

Elvis Costello  
The Man  
Liberation

The last volume in the welcome and much overdue local reissue of the Elvis Costello catalogue is this greatest hits compilation. Originally released in the UK and USA in 1985, and therefore not covering either of 1986's releases *King of America* or *Blood and Chocolate*, contractual problems prevented it being available here until now.

Now it seems to me that the only really sensible and comprehensive Elvis Costello compilation would be a 12-album set containing each of the originals plus the essential *10 Bloody Marys* and *10 How's Your Fathers* collection of non-album tracks. A single record could never be representative of the enigmatic and chameleon-like career of Declan McManus, although this album makes a fairly reasonable

stab at it.

For obvious commercial considerations *The Man* concentrates on the biggest hit albums, with *This Year's Model*, *Armed Forces*, *Get Happy!* and *Punch the Clock* each contributing three tracks, at the expense however of some of the finer tracks from records like *Imperial Bedroom* and *Trust*. I can think of four or five songs I would have regarded as essential to this sort of collection — no 'Less than Zero' or 'Man Out of Time,' or for that matter 'Radio Radio,' but that's personal taste, and to be fair there's also nothing I would have left off. Tracks like 'High Fidelity' and 'New Amsterdam,' both off the wonderful *Get Happy!*, and *Trust*'s 'Clubland' are still crucial and spine-tingling to my ears. It's also gratifying to see the compiler (uncredited) had the sense to include the two moody masterpieces 'Shipbuilding' and 'Pills and Soap.'

Some liner notes would have been helpful, but that said, this record works as all good compilations should, as an introduction to the man. It's also great to do the dishes to.

Simon Grigg

Various Artists  
The Harder the Edge...  
The Rocka the Roll  
Jayrem

Ah, compilation albums — *The Harder they Come* meets *AK79*? Not quite, but a diverting bunch of "alternative" bands from the north to the deep south, gathered together on

record by Flesh D-Vice's Gerald Dwyer, show that "punk" is as wide-ranging a term in '87 Newzild as it is anywhere else.

My two favourites are No Idea and the Mindfuckers from Dunedin. No Idea sound miles clearer than everything else, but there is no significant sacrifice of energy for clarity; they close the album with the amusing 'Yank Me Doodle.' The Mindfuckers' Walkman recording of 'Millions of Pills,' 'Grab Your Partner' and 'I'm a Duck' is shitty beyond belief, but they're funny and I still like 'em best.

The rest veers from *Metal Box* PIL-style ?Fog, and Flesh D-Vice's 'Shifting Night,' to 'Confused' by Compos Mentis — with dippy frantic Slits/Kleenex style of delivery. Five Year Mission provide the almost singalong 'Adult Life' and Armatrak are getting faster at every recording, but overall, the record fails to point to any great "New Zealand" sound emerging, nothing really that innovative — the Brothers Gorgonzola mix in some odd rock'n'roll, but the overall path of this music runs straight and narrow.

It's fun and it does the job, but in the end, I'd still like to know where the Warners are — if anyone deserves to go on here, it's them, and they could've given *The Harder the Edge* enough "rockatheroll" to knock yer socks off, I'm sure, and that's what it really needed: at least one fucking amazing band.

Paul McKessar

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