

Steve Winwood



Chronicles

Wake Me Up On Judgment Day
While You See a Chance
Vasant Chair
Help Me Angel
My Loves Leavin'

Valerie
Are Of a Diner
Higher Love
Spanish Dancer
Talking Back to the Night

THE BEST FROM
TEN YEARS OF SOLO ALBUMS



RECORDS

The Smiths Strangeways Here We Come Rough Trade

This was recorded before the recent rift with Marr, and he's been quoted as saying that it's probably the best thing they've ever done. And he's not far wrong, as *Strangeways* dishes up fewer of the typically Smiths' indulgences that have disrupted the magic and moods of their previous long players, compilations obviously excluded.

In an album bleeding pessimism Marr, as usual, counters Morrissey's black moods and humour with some simple but inspired playing on the 10 songs. 'Girlfriend in Aloma' is already an ideal single — wistful and honest with its love/hate dilemma — and add to that 'A Rush and a Push and the Land is Ours' as another potential single, thanks to Marr's piano underlay and some phrasing from the bard that wrings emotion out of the song.

Every Smiths' album has a couple of pivotal tracks, namely things like 'Suffer Little Children,' 'How Soon is Now?' and 'The Queen is Dead.' They're generally tortured (torturous?) epics that can either make or break the record as far as continuity is concerned. On *Strangeways*, side one is built around 'Death of a Disco Dancer,' one of their better opuses, which slowly builds in intensity before falling into the comparative relaxation of 'Girlfriend in Aloma' and then up a notch for 'Stop Me if You've Heard This One Before.'

Side two revolves around 'Paint a Vulgar Picture,' where a great ringing guitar intro throws Morrissey into an invective on record company exploitation. Its simplicity, directness and sheer presence make it one of their finest moments. The album closes with the selfish but haunting sentiments of 'I Won't Share You.'

It's a short step from melancholy to self-pity and that's an accusation that's often been levelled at Morrissey. Only the dense, mournful disorientation of 'Last Night I Dreamt That Somebody Loved Me' could be said to be self-pitying — and that's open to debate. He's also come under fire for his affectations — those effete, theatrical vocal displays and eccentric poses that seem premeditated to go against the prevailing sense of authenticity in order to antagonise purists and articulate the failing of the English within the brilliance of Marr's rock and roll.

While other bands have followed the decline and fall of political Britain, the Smiths have sketched and recorded the lives of the people who're suffering, and there's no doubt that Morrissey, for all of his alleged poses, has captured and described the human condition at a time when British rock 'n' roll needed a band to pick up the ball dropped by the likes of Echo and the Bunnymen a few years ago. And as *Strangeways* proves for the fourth time round, they've made noises,



Smiths' Morrissey and Johnny Marr.

although imperfect, that have the resonance and relevance that makes great rock 'n' roll.
George Kay

Jill Jones Jill Jones Paisley Park

As a "Prince spotter" I wonder if my perspective is politically sound. One could end this review with "a must for Prince fans" ... beginning the review is not so easy.

The album is a curio for Prince spotters as he co-wrote four tracks, wrote one alone (1979's 'With You'), produced three songs and the powerhouse All Day All Night' is one of the last tracks he did with the Revolution, a track I'd readily put on a Prince best efforts compilation.

What happens when the lights dim and Prince's star is absent? Well, Jill and Revolution member David Z take over producing and various combos of musos play, from session veteran Steve Gadd and Idol socialite Steve Stevens to Minneapolis sons Jellybean Johnson and Eric Leeds (of Madhouse). These differing backdrops provide Jill Jones with the space to strut her vocal style. She writes and produces in the quirky manner associated with Prince's spin-offs such as Shiela E and Family, yet her tough vocals and world weary persona help her to avoid the pitfall of artful preciousness that consumed the earlier Paisley projects.

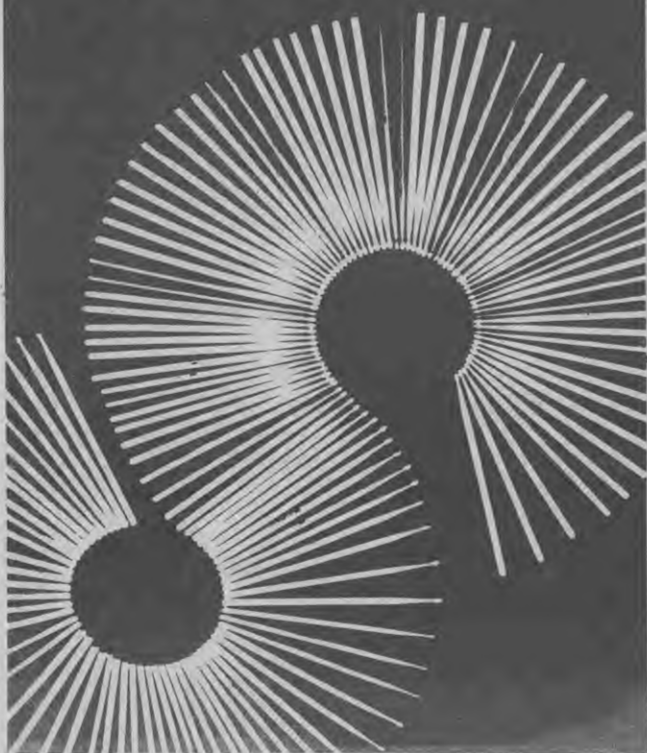
Ironically, Ms Jones may have learnt some of her vocal licks from Tina Marie, the protegee of arch Prince rival Rick James, as Mrs Jones (Jill's mother) managed Marie's career. Maybe the two universes of the Princes of pimp pomp touch here on this album — who cares?

What's clear is that Jill Jones doesn't need Prince to write a good song — all three of her sole writing credits are hot — 'Baby You're a Trip,' 'My Man' and 'Violet Blue' are great tracks. This lady may not have decisively broken out of the Paisley Park mould with this debut LP, but she sure is a prime contender to do so if she can keep her groove growing.
Murray Cammick

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