

# RECORDS

## SELECTER TOO MUCH PRESSURE 2-TONE

Neol (pronounced Neil) Davies, guitarist and principal songwriter for Selecter, considers the band to be the epitome of 'Rock against Racism' and he should know, after all, of the seven members he's the only caucasian.

On this, the Two-Toners' debut album, they show all the prowess and agility that has resulted in their favourable British chart position. Vocalist Pauline Black possesses both urgency and originality as she powers her way through material which is a pot-pourri of modern musical influences. Of course the vital ingredient is ska, but Selecter music is about integration; blacks with whites, and rock with reggae.

Davies' main lyrical thoughts are on a par with counterpart Jerry Dammers of the Specials, and the violence thesis receives a thorough working through on songs such as "Murder", "They Make Me Mad", "Danger", "Black & Blue", and the aptly-titled "Street Feeling". The real strength however lies in the ridiculously catchy "Every Day" and the remarkably uncharacteristic "Three Minute Hero". If there is a weak link it would probably be the almost totally nonsensical "My Collier", which comes complete with government health warnings and barking dogs.

Bassman Charlie Anderson says "Two-Tone is about using music as a common language". If that's the key to racial harmony, then maybe the government should give us all a copy of *Too Much Pressure* in the next Budget!

Mark Phillips

## MILES DAVIS CIRCLE IN THE ROUND CBS

There can be no overstating the importance to jazz of trumpeter Miles Davis. For 30 years he has been extending musical boundaries. In the late 60s he became one of the first jazzmen to recognise elements and structures in rock that could be successfully assimilated into jazz. Miles' growing interest in rock culminated in the 1970 album *Bitches Brew*, Miles' first (and only) gold record.

Accepted as an innovator by the rock audience, Davis played the Fillmore and the outdoor festivals, gradually lost his jazz audience, and continued to make frequent recordings, until 1975 when he seemed to dry up. These later recordings were generally unsatisfactory, neither jazz nor rock, an unsettling, uneasy amalgam.

Without the great soloists of his earlier groups, Davis seemed to be up a creek. Always his own man, he stuck to his guns, and while no-one knew what, if anything, David would do next he was not to be dismissed.

The hiatus in Miles' career has sent CBS to



Miles Davis



The Selecter

their vaults, to come up with this superb double album of 10 tracks spanning the years 1955-70, all but one of which have never been available. One can only wonder why not when listening to the performances of Davis and his wonderful cohorts, including Cannonball Adderley, John Coltrane, Wayne Shorter and Herbie Hancock. The flights of Davis and Adderley on Cole Porter's "Love for Sale" from 1958 or the mesmerising 26 minute voyage of the title track, which dates from 1967, are in the front rank of Davis' work. His music stands the test of time, with only the acid-rock dronings of David Crosby's "Guinnevere", the most recently recorded track, sounding dated.

For this album we should be grateful. A well-drafted chart of the career of one of jazz's pathfinders, it also offers a feast of fine music.

Ken Williams

## VARIOUS ARTISTS LABELS UNLIMITED (THE SECOND RECORD COLLECTION) CHERRY RED

The rise of the small independent record label and the associated resurgence of the importance of singles were two of the most significant occurrences of the seventies. The way was open for new aspirants, who would otherwise have been ignored, to air their eccentricities in public. This in turn introduced the bands to the press and the big label moguls who often (Human League, Mekons, Stiff Little Fingers, Beat, Gang of Four etc) or not would seduce them from their humble beginnings.

Anyway this album is the second Cherry Red small labels' singles compilation, a follow-up, if you like, to *Business Unusual*. It doesn't contain the shot of pure inspiration that was Thomas Leer's "Private Plane" but overall it is a more consistent and likeable collection of

garage noises.

Rudi, Spizz Oil, Newtown Neurotics and Scissor Fits turn out quirky alternative pop gems, and Staa Marx perform a smouldering version of "Pleasant Valley Sunday".

In a different garage but on the same street are Piranhas, the Shapes and I Jog and the Track Suits who have obviously studied Jilted John's philosophies on fish'n'chips.

And not forgetting the serious young men, A.K. Process and Second Layer who would like to convert you with their technological abstractions.

An endearing album with more than its fair quota of fun and rock'n'roll from what could be tomorrow's superstars. Now let's have a third compilation.

George Kay

## VARIOUS ARTISTS THE LONDON R&B SESSIONS ARISTA

These 16 tracks were recorded live at London's famed rock pub, the Hope and Anchor, Islington, last November and December. They represent a sort of R&B *Live at the Roxy*, a sample of the R&B renaissance bands currently cropping up on the British scene. Like the punk groups of the Roxy album most of the bands here impress with their energy rather than their technical capabilities. Some are already names (Wilko Johnson, the Blues Band), others have probably already disappeared. Small matter, this album catches a moment in time as the latest wave of British R&B (is it the third, fourth, fifth?) gets up a head of steam. It makes one regret live recording facilities weren't advanced enough in the early 60s to capture the pre-notoriety days of the Rolling Stones at the Crawdaddy club in Richmond. Still, this album is as good a sample of

loose, boozy public house rhythm and blues as you'll find.

The problem of 'various-artists' records is that almost by definition you're not going to like everything. However, there is more than enough good stuff from the 12 bands to please all but those who insist on technical perfection, and it never was that sort of music anyway.

Take a listen to the opening track, Lew Lewis' crazed version of Little Walter's "You'd Better Watch Yourself". It sums up the album. Other good things are Wilko Johnson's even-more-crazed version of Screaming Jay Hawkins' "The Whammy," the (hitherto unknown) American Blues Legends, the semi-legendary British rockers the Pirates, and the Blues Band, who recorded some of their own fine album at the Hope and Anchor.

The economy-minded will be interested to know the album has just over 54 minutes playing time.

Ken Williams

## WAYNE ROLAND BROWN STEALER OF HEARTS RCA STEVE MCDONALD THE RIDDLE AND THE RHYME ODE

In case you thought that all NZ newcomers were garage bands we have two gents here under scrutiny who are far removed from the makeshift sounds.

W.R. Brown, Hastings born, is a busker and all-round music enthusiast and he already has three albums under his belt. *Stealer of Hearts*, then, is his fourth and it's notable for Glyn Tucker Jnr's crystalline production, if nothing else.

With excellent studio musicians W.R. Brown covers his own country ("Jodi") and funk ("Lucy's On the Phone") and deals with other material with professional confidence. So, it's flattering, believe it or not to say that *Stealer of Hearts*, songs, sound and all, would grace the LA rock zone. Content and style aside this album is definite evidence that the local scene is expanding in scope and expertise.

Steve McDonald has been likened to Rick Wakeman because of his appearance and synthesiser predilections, but at heart he's more akin to Elton John.

Preconceptions of symphonic pomp on his album *The Riddle and the Rhyme* (Glyn Tucker's expert hand at work here as well) are soon dispelled by "Sentimental Boys", "Universal Prime Force" and the title track which all sound like he's had piano lessons at Elton John's place ... as well as singing tuition. Instrumentals are at hand in the form of "Omnipresence" and "Meltdown" and they're not as overblown as songs of this ilk are prone to be.

Look, the music on these two albums doesn't light my fire but like it or not NZ needs the Browns and the McDonalds. Garage band land we'd like to be but narrowness in vision and tolerance is only going to be damaging in its restrictiveness in the long run. Sermon over.

George Kay

# FLIGHT-X7

## I Lose Control



JUNE 9, 10 & 11  
WINDSOR CASTLE

JUNE 13 & 14  
FRAMPTONS, HAMILTON


JUNE 19-21  
GLUEPOT & KICKS

JUNE 26-28  
NEW STATION HOTEL

JULY 3-5  
WINDSOR CASTLE

JULY 10-12  
FRAMPTONS

out now on Polygram "I Lose Control"



Rooftop  
Shore City  
Takapuna

498-142  
Open until  
3:00am

# KICKS

JUNE 12, 13 & 14  
ZIG ZAG  
TOM SHARPLIN'S  
ROCK'N'ROLL BAND

JUNE 19-21  
KATZ  
FLIGHT X-7  
JUNE 26-28  
LIP SERVICE  
COUP D'ETAT  
JULY 3-5  
CRUZE  
STEAMSHACK  
JULY 10-12  
TIGERS  
CROCODILES

FULLY LICENSED