

Sleep", which builds up to a climactic guitar solo from John Perry.

The Only Ones are sounding more confident as a band, and *Baby's Got A Gun* could be their breakthrough. I just wish Perrett could be a little less jaundiced in his outlook.

Duncan Campbell

BUZZCOCKS DIFFERENT KIND OF TENSION UNITED ARTISTS

Way back in the dark days of 1977, when everyone was singing about hate and violence, Pete Shelley was writing love songs. True the Buzzcocks played the tunes at breakneck speed but that didn't hide the fact they were still love songs.

Different Kind Of Tension is, excluding the *Singles Album*, the Buzzcocks third LP release. It shows a certain sense of maturity in the songwriting that many 'name bands' never manage to achieve. From the intensely-complex title track to the ingeniously harmonious "You Say You Don't Love Me", Shelley displays a range of capabilities that seemingly know no bounds. Not to be outdone, lead guitarist Steve Diggle contributes three capable compositions, best of which is the frantic "Mad Mad Judy".

Excellent cover design, and a brilliant splash of colour make this album stick out like a sore thumb. What's your excuse for not buying it?

Mark Phillips

RECORDS CRASHES VIRGIN

The Records, unashamedly worshipping the spirit of Big Star and Dwight Twilley, took their excellent debut *Shades In Bed* into the American Top 40 last year, an achievement their models dearly deserved but never even hinted at managing. Perhaps it was that tiny sniff of Cheap Trick at the start of side one that got the Americans going? Huw Gower has been replaced by former Moon Martin guitarist Jude Cole since album one, but the band remains firmly the vision of drummer and ex-Kursaal Flyer Will Birch, who writes it all with rhythm guitarist John Wicks. And production this time is done by Craig Leon, whom readers need only be reminded did the first Ramones.

Musically there really hasn't been any noticeable shifts since *Shades In Bed*. This is largely American music, but with British writing and British voices — a recipe that's hard to fault. And the Records also have a tougher and more energetic rock base than earlier America-admiring prototypes like Stealers Wheel and Starry Eyed And Laughing, which must partly explain why the latter are no longer with us. "Hearts In Her Eyes" was chosen as the single off this one, but "The Same Mistakes" (the chorus is like hearing a great Hollies song at 15) and "Girl In Golden Disc" sound even better possibilities. And "Guitars In The Sky" is up there in the inspiration-for-songs category with Andry Pratt's flawless "Give It All

Records



To Music". Well, almost.

None of these guys come on like musician-magazine-poll virtuosos, but they are a pop-rock band in the very best sense of pop, rock — and band.

Roy Colbert

INTERVIEW SNAKES AND LOVERS VIRGIN

Interview, a five-piece Bath-based Gabriel-encouraged outfit, were on the receiving end last year of one or two barbed reviews of their first album, *Big Oceans*. OK it didn't break new ground but as a debut it had a subtlety and consistency that ranked it as the most mature album from a bunch of outsiders in a long while.

On *Big Oceans* they were accused of shaping their ambitions to suit the American market, an accusation which has more foundation on *Snakes* but as it happens this is not necessarily a dig on the negative side. The album is slicker, more direct (try the armoured pop of "Hide and Seek" or "I Hope It's Me") but it still displays the band's adroit instrumental flickerings, particularly Peter Allerhand's guitar skills on the tasteful balladeering of "The Conqueror" and "Style on Seaview" and his Santana note-sustaining exercises on "Until I Hold Her".

Interview warrant better than they've currently been: receiving and it's possible that because their brand of music strides the old world and the new that they'll end up with very few friends. The middlemen get nothing and that's sad.

But I'll certainly vouch for them.

George Kay

JOAN ARMATRADING ME, MYSELF, I A&M

Joan Armatrading manages to escape categorisation better than almost any of her contemporaries, and it isn't easy to adequately

describe her latest record. It doesn't sound like a record with two of the E Street Band on it, but it is. It doesn't sound like a record with Chris Spedding on it, but it is. It doesn't sound like it was produced by old Blondie producer Richard Gottherer, but it was.

One thing it definitely does sound like, though, is a dancing record. You might have tried a slow swoon around the kitchen to "Love and Affection", but most of *Me, Myself, I* is the real thing.

The opening cut, the title track, is as straightforward and infectious as the best of Motown, and "Ma-Me-O Beach" positively boogies. These combine with a couple of other tracks with a more obvious reggae influence than ever before, and her usual funk numbers to make the whole album easily her most up-tempo.

Armatrading's melodic and lyrical gifts are, if anything, enhanced by the overall feeling of bouyancy and drive, and it all adds up to another very good album. Perhaps her best yet.

Aimed at the feet, the ears, and also what's between them.

Steven McDonald

FEELIES CRAZY RHYTHMS STIFF

If there's any truth in the story that Jonathon Richman spent his teens locked in the bathroom listening to the Velvet Underground, then I'm sure the Feelies repeated the exercise with the Modern Lovers' first album.

As the title indicates, the Feelies are into rhythms — dynamic, punchy little melt-in-the-mouth melodies, that sound invitingly fresh yet comfortably familiar. The lyrics touch on some intriguing topics, none more so than "The Boy With Perpetual Nervousness", and a look at the cover makes one wonder if they aren't speaking from first-hand experience.

The boys from New Jersey have produced an almost frighteningly good debut album. Every idea works better than even the most op-

Buzzcocks



timistic Feelie could hope for. The re-working of the Beatles' "Everybody's Got Something To Hide", gives the impression it was written for them.

Would the Whizz Kids sound like this if they lived in New York?

Mark Phillips

IAN HUNTER WELCOME TO THE CLUB CHRYSALIS

Hunter has always been just on the other side of success. Whether with Mott the Hoople, solo or in collusion with Mick Ronson he's always near-missed in terms of commercial impact.

This double live album (well one side is mostly recorded "live" at Media Sound, New York) with Ronson in tow, probably won't rectify Hunter's position as rock's most talented and most permanent underdog, but it is one of the few justifiable double live undertakings released in the last few years.

As you'd expect the album is a fair overview of his career with the emphasis falling on his gone-but-not-forgotten days with Mott and on his last solo album *You're Never Alone With A Schizophrenic*.

Of the Mott standards "Dudes" and "All the Way From Memphis" steal the honours but the album's climax is a beautifully controlled version of "Bastard" from *Schizophrenic*. Other favourites, "Once Bitten Twice Shy", "Angeline" and Ronson's interpretation of Richard Rogers' "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" (the title of Ronson's first solo) are all given a suitable airing.

So *Welcome to The Club* is proof that one of last decades revered rockers is still capable of producing the required punch but Hunter has definitely lost any hope of being that household name that he threatened to be years ago with the Mott album.

Still he'll go down in the annals as the man who virtually invented shades.

George Kay

