

BRIEFS

Various, *The Secret Policeman's Ball* (Island)

The Amnesty International concerts in London over the past few years have brought together some of Britain's finest comedy talents. The 1979 concert was no exception. The line-up includes John Cleese, Peter Cook, Michael Palin, Terry Jones and Billy Connolly. The general style of comedy derives from *Monty Python* (including the Cheese Shop sketch) and the earlier *Beyond the Fringe*. Highly recommended, with the proviso that the audience is irritatingly over-recorded, almost drowning the performers on occasion. KW

Fabulous Poodles, *Think Pink* (Blueprint)

The third or fourth album from the Poodles and they're still restricting themselves by their allegiance to out-moded ideas of being a wacky all-round good-time band.

Think Pink is enjoyable in places. "Cossack Cowboy" and "Hollywood Dagnet" spring to mind, but too often, "Anna Rexia" and "You Wouldn't Listen", they aimlessly borrow fifties' forms and styles. And that's not so fab. GK

Where the Buffalo Roam, *Original Movie Soundtrack* (Backstreet)

The movie is "based on the twisted legend of Dr Hunter S. Thompson," noted gonzo journalist, whose entertainingly improbable writings have enlivened the pages of *Rolling Stone*. Dr Thompson is played by Bill Murray, the so-laid-back FM disc jockey of National Lampoon's *Goodbye Pop* album. The soundtrack features some great late 60s-early 70s music — Hendrix, Dylan, Temptations, Four Tops, Creedence Clearwater Revival — as well as theme music assembled by Neil Young, which is mostly variations on "Home on the Range". Perhaps only Young's askew music could reflect in sound the demented vision of America that pervades Thompson's writing. KW

Tonio K, *Amerika* (CBS)

Already a near-legend on the strength of *Life In A Foodchain*, Tonio K is one of the few musicians with the sass enough to satirise the myths that others feed off.

Amerika doesn't boast the big "K" for nuthin' as K shuffles hard and deals out his own brand of rock'n'roll stacked with fine tunes ("Say Goodbye" and "Cinderella's Baby"), horny rockers ("Trouble") and sane lunacy ("Merzsuite").

Recommended.

John Fahey Visits Washington, D.C. (Takoma)

This is an album of solo acoustic guitar music of very limited interest. Drawing heavily on American folk influences, Fahey has a tone that can be both resonantly pure and stabbingly brittle, but his music lacks impetus and, most importantly, emotion. Too often it seems merely self-indulgent. For students of guitar technique only. KW

Fingerprintz, *Distinguishing Marks* (Virgin)

The second album from Jimmie O'Neill and his three popsters. *The Very Dab* was forgettable but the new one shows a willingness to learn from past inconsistencies. The band have developed a ringing pop sound, not unlike the Records', and they've used it to winning effect on "Bullet-proof Heart" and "Radiation" among others.

Not an important album by any means but one of the more pleasing second leaguers. GK

Rory Gallagher, *Blueprint* (Chrysalis)

Yet another Gallagher reissue, this time from 1973. *Blueprint* shows the breadth of Gallagher's guitar talents. He cranks out hot licks on electric and acoustic, as well as playing slide and harmonica. While applauding the moves to keep Gallagher's catalogue available, one must ask what of the two live albums, *In Europe* and *Irish Tour*? For sheer attack, they eclipse the studio recordings. KW

AC/DC, *Back In Black* (Atlantic)

When you're talkin' Heavy Metal, which you shouldn't do too often, then AC/DC have gotta be included.

Vocalist Bon Scott died earlier this year but replacement Brian Johnson, who sounds like a cross between Robert Plant and John Fogarty, has stepped in as if he was born to it.

Packaged in a black sleeve as a sign of respect for Scott, *Back in Black*, their second album produced by Robert Lange, offers the usual diet of meat, HM. Some people live on it, me, I'm a comparative vegetarian. GK

Herman Brood and His Wild Romance, *Go Nuts* (Ariola)

A Dutchman with Fowley connections is a daunting prospect but Brood and Co manage to avoid most preconceived disasters.

Attached firmly to the American Mid-West philosophy of hard-rockin' (vocally he sounds like Hammond Gamble) Brood rallies his Wild Romance around traditional rousers like "Hot Shot" and more sedate efforts like "Easy Pick Up" and "Laurie". All well handled mind.

Surprise.

Ozark Mountain Daredevils, *Ozark Mountain Daredevils* (CBS)

They were always tasteful and considerate in their country rock forays, stopping short of the Hollywood complacency trip that gobbled the Eagles.

This album may be unhip and fashion being what it is, songs with the stealth of "Empty Cup" and "Rosalie" will probably fall on deaf ears. But the OMD's are still worth the time. GK

Eddy Grant, *Love In Exile* (Ice)

Eddy Grant's first album, *Walking On Sunshine*, was a pleasant surprise, blending reggae rhythms with synthesisers to open up new avenues in ethnic music. Sadly, he seems to have ignored those directions in this follow-up, opting instead for the safer route of disco-soul. Once again, Grant sings, plays and produces, with a few friends on the side, and the album was recorded at his own London Coach House Studios. The material is mostly up-tempo jive, superficial and undemanding. It doesn't go beyond the feet.

Disappointing, after his auspicious debut. DC

THE BEAT

I JUST CAN'T STOP IT

ARISTA

Mirror In The Bathroom
 Hands Off ... She's Mine
 Two Swords
 Twist & Crawl
 Rough Rider
 Click Click
 Big Shot
 Whine & Grine/Stand Down Margaret
 Noise In This World
 Can't Get Used To Losing You
 Best Friend
 Jackpot

"... The end result is quite possibly the best album to come out of the whole ska revival"
 Mark Phillips *Rip It Up*, July.

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