



David Byrne and Brian Eno

David Byrne and Brian Eno  
My Life in the Bush of Ghosts  
Sire

The Byrne-Eno involvement in African music was the guiding force behind *Remain in Light*. Concurrent with that album the two academics were working haphazardly on a more personal and esoteric venture, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*.

Again the emphasis is on African rhythms, hypnotic in design but this time out concerned with providing more truncated set pieces of bustling funk for the pre-recorded voices involved. For *Remain In Light* Byrne revealed that his lyrics were taken from evangelists' speeches on the radio. On much of *Ghosts* he has recorded fragments of the actual religious rants and used them on several tracks with the result that 'Help Me Somebody' and 'The Jezebel Spirit', particularly, have an amazingly obsessive, almost macabre aura that's driven home by relentless funk. On other tracks Byrne and Eno have used, with cunning suitability, the voices of traditional African singers and further radio excerpts, 'America is Waiting' and 'Mea Culpa'.

In negative terms *Ghosts* can be seen as a collection of Talking Heads' instrumental backing tracks that are a touch too exploitive and condescending in their adaptation of things African. A back-to-the-roots journey by superior intellects and all that jazz. But don't go away because Byrne and Eno, on the positive side, have managed to fuse a number of disturbing, haunting and accessible parts into effective songs. A good album and not above entertainment.

George Kay

Ellen Foley  
Spirit of St Louis  
Epic

Ellen Foley's debut, *Nightout*, was a collection well-suited to Ian Hunter's wall of sound. Her second, *Spirit of St Louis*, has a production credit to 'My Boyfriend' — Clasher Mick Jones.



Ellen Foley

*Spirit* bears little resemblance to its predecessor. The songs are, in the main, written specifically for her by Jones, Joe Strummer and mutual friend Tymon Dogg. The musicians include the Clash and most of the Blockheads.

In general, the Strummer/Jones pieces resemble *Sandinista*-period Clash. Side One opens with the first of six. 'The Shattered Palace' features flute, French lyrics and somehow sounds Greek. 'Torchlight' is a duet with Mick Dogg's 'Beautiful Waste Of Time' is just that, apart from Davy Payne's sax. Edith Piaf's 'My Legionnaire' closes the side.

The calypso of 'Theatre Of Cruelty' suits Foley's voice wonderfully. It is by far the best of the Strummer/Jones numbers. Foley's sole writing credit is for 'Phases Of Travel', which is strong enough to be a single. A good sign for the future. Three ballads, none without some interest, round off.

Though patchy, *Spirit of St Louis* is still enjoyable. Most important, it shows a lady reaching out to find herself musically.

Mark Phillips

Delbert McClinton  
The Jealous Kind  
Capitol

McClinton, like Buddy Holly and every second out-of-town character on television's 'Happy Days', was born in Lubbock, Texas. He's a veteran of tiny fragments of rock history (harmonica on Bruce Channel's 'Hey Baby' etc) songs for others (Emmylou Harris, Waylon Jennings) obscure third division cult albums (the two by Delbert & Glen) and five rated solo efforts since 1975. He's probably played a million bars, and if you walked into a bar and heard him performing this latest album, with the Muscle Shoals band in tow, then it would be a hard bar to leave.

'The Jealous Kind' boasts a fine selection of songs, all loosely aligned to R&B, including a trilogy of familiar stuff in the middle of side two for those reluctant to try something TOTALLY new ('Bright Side Of The Road', 'Take Me To The River' and 'Shaky Ground' — all done

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exceedingly well) and, even, a hit single.

Any bozo could make a reasonable record with the Muscle Shoals team in tow you might say, but not any bozo could sing stuff like the title track to this album as well as McClinton. Those who dabbled in R&B in the 1970s with the likes of Van Morrison, Allen Toussaint and Dobie Gray, can happily dabble their way through 1981 with this one.

Roy Colbert

Steve Winwood  
Arc of a Diver  
Island

To those of us old enough to remember when ... this album is an uncomfortable foretaste of middle age.

Back in the 1960s, Steve Winwood was one of the great white hopes going into black music. For a seventeen-year-old from Birmingham to sing and play 'Georgia On My Mind' as well as Ray Charles suggested a great future. As pianist, guitarist, singer and writer, Winwood virtually was the Spencer Davis Group.

He went on to direct Traffic — with often brilliant success. There was also a brief stumble into Blind Faith. But for much of the 1970s, Winwood was semi-reclusive, emerging only for the occasional one-off project. His first and last solo album was decidedly unfashionable. Besides me, about ten other people in the country thoroughly enjoyed it.

*Arc of a Diver*, however, has given Winwood an American hit single. Unfortunately, that doesn't make it a better album. Where he once had urgency and passion, Winwood now sounds complacent. At best, this music cruises; sometimes it merely chugs. It's the sort of bland, blue-eyed soul that sells so comfortably in America. Winwood's once-vital talent seems in limbo — the sediment of skill remains.

Peter Thomson

Knobz  
Sudden Exposure  
WEA

As a debut album, *Sudden Exposure* is evidence of an increasingly high standard as far as production goes (produced and engineered by Alan Galbraith), but it seems stuck between aiming for an eighties image, and a seventies method of approach. It's just not new stuff.

Spoken lines injected into tunes can work when used sparingly, but here the device is used too often to sound convincing. The down home 'Culture?' fits the humorous hit formula, and 'KGB' almost makes it, perhaps the Stranglers may have been able to pull it off, but with the Knobz it comes dangerously close to sounding weak.

The boys can play, granted, and the rhythms are there, especially in the punchier 'Big Brother'. Saxophone gives huge relief just

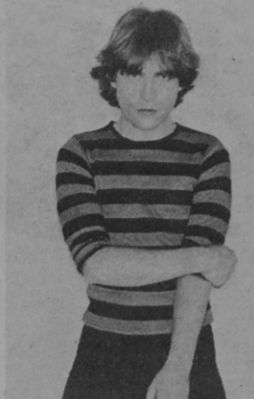
when you're about to overdose on keyboards, and the vocals on 'Cyborg Sally' sound like something out of a Gilbert and Sullivan chorus.

It's easy too, to write with your heart on your sleeve, with the old artist's ache of, 'who will listen, who will buy my records?' Listen to 'Casualties'. The test for the Knobz will be surviving without being old hat.

Annlouise Martin

Phil Seymour  
Epic

Seymour was Dwight Twilley's partner for two albums, helping in the process to make some of the finest Beatles For Sale-Influenced pop to ever come out of America. Seymour has stuck with much the same thing on his first solo album, a quite recognisably Twilley-like record through not only the vocals, but also the presence of Twilley guitarist Bill Pitcock IV and two



Phil Seymour



Stevie Winwood

songs from Twilley himself.

Twilley albums mix quality pop-rock with the occasional masterpiece ('You Were So Warm' and 'Standing In The Shadows Of Love' especially) and it is the latter, the ability to write something genuinely exceptional, that has kept him out in front of his many Angloid-aping contemporaries. Seymour, who wasn't a writer in the Twilley days, lacks a masterpiece (or two) on his debut, and while he has come up with eleven solid up-tempo pieces of powerful pop, there really isn't a single hook or melody line that even begins to insinuate itself until the fourth or fifth playing. But a likeable record for sure, and one safely recommended to all 18 Twilley fans in this country.

Roy Colbert

Borich 'n' Tilders  
The Blues Had a Baby  
RCA

Those veterans of the Australian scene, Kevin Borich and Dutch Tilders, get together which in many ways surpasses their solo recordings.

Recorded direct-to-disc, the album fairly

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