

Basically, the album is a chronicle of the personal feelings and problems of Ian Curtis, a personality too delicately balanced between sense and sensitivity. Curtis felt things too deeply, and his lyrics also reveal that he often blamed himself as a sort of passive first person for fouled relations. His revelations are the power behind *Unknown Pleasures*. They dictate the breadth and depth of the music and the intensity of mood, but it's to the band's credit that they match his disturbed emotions with evocative deftness.

Anyway, the album makes a direct start with 'Disorder', a confession of confusion that establishes a fairly typical musical pattern of bass or drum intro followed by Albrecht's guitar and finally Curtis. Next up is 'Day of the Lords', slower tempo, a guitar hey-day for Albrecht as he spreads the musical base for Curtis's pessimistic cry of "where will it end?" 'Candidate' chills, a real cavern of despair, another emotional dead-end and another love affair on the rocks. 'Insight' we can all relate to, dreams crumbling in the face of reality.

By now, Curtis's numbness is contagious, it effects you because what he's conveying is obviously too real for him to handle. Side One, the Outside, concludes with 'New Dawn Fades', the final closing of doors on any hope ("This pain's too much, can't take much more") and a natural conclusion to Outside's pleasures.

The five songs that make up the Inside are collectively less harrowing, more independent and, so, less inter-connected. 'She's Lost Control' has that succinctly memorable bass line, and 'Shadowplay' gives Albrecht the opportunity to stretch a little. 'Wilderness' is a rumbling metaphorical travelogue that

makes way for 'Interzone', the closest song to orthodox rock 'n'roll on the album as far as dynamics goes. And finally 'I Remember Nothing', a return to the mood of the Outside, and another carefully controlled piece of building intensity, a fitting conclusion.

Unknown Pleasures, then, is a hair-raising account of what it's like to feel too deeply, to carry too much weight. An excellent album from most points of view, and one which hasn't suffered through the two years' delay in being released here.

Desperation Takes Hold

Last May, Ian Curtis took his own life, the result of 'domestic upheavals'. A drastic solution that emphasised the desperation inherent in his music, the emotional knot of his lyrics.

Before his death, the band had recorded the now legendary 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' and the album *Closer*. The single graphically reveals his inability to cope with disintegrating relationships. Allied to a beautiful, concise and haunting melody Curtis lays bare the agony, anxiety and desperation that hits most of us at some time:

*Why is this bedroom so cold
Turned away on your side.
Is my timing that flawed
Our respect run so dry.*

Honesty as articulate as this is rare and songs as accomplished and moving as 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' are rarer still.

Both the 7" and 12" pressings contain two versions of the song, the main side being more aggressive and electric than the flip which places more emphasis on vocal clarity. Also on both pressings is 'These Days', a fine enough song with a bustling rhythm and a solid tune, but next to 'Love' it stands no chance.

Well that's the first chapter in the book of local Joy Division releases and if it wasn't for Factory's rather high-handed



Pauline Black, Selector.

attitude (NZ described as a 'far-flung' territory) we would have had them much sooner. But now we have them, and *Closer* isn't far away, so the dallying seems to be over.

Be that as it may, Joy Division, now the three piece, New Order (signs of self-importance here), are in the (un) enviable position of being contemporary legends. For the last two years they have undergone a sort of deification process which has placed them above criticism in some quarters. On *Unknown Pleasures* and 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' they reveal their undoubted ability at being able to express depth of feeling with apt simplicity and power. Appreciate them but don't worship them because that's a status no-one can live up to.

George Kay

**Various
Dance Craze
Two Tone**

Dance Craze is the sound

track for a movie whose advance publicity claims it represents the finest of the British ska revolution caught live on celluloid.

It comes at the right time to tidy up the loose ends of the movement as the better bands move on and the lesser fade. The album represents accurately the qualities of the bands represented here — highlighting which bands have left themselves room to move, and which have painted themselves into a corner.

The big four; Specials, Selector, Beat and Madness, provide the best moments of what is essentially a greatest hits collection, while Bad Manners and the Bodysnatchers are barely tolerable. You have heard most of the good numbers in their studio forms, but it is worth mentioning the magnificent 'ragged-at-the-edge-cos-it's-four-a.m. sleaze of the Specials' 'Niteclub'.

I find myself playing this

album at fairly regular intervals, both because it is a greatest hits record, and because it has the sort of exuberance that Madness showed here last month. What more could you ask?

Simon Grigg

**Selector
Celebrate The Bullet
Chrysalis**

The Ska Wave has had its 15 minutes, now it's time to talk turkey. The crop of bands which emerged in 1979-80 has splintered, lost any common purpose. Each band must now stand on its own merits. And the proof lies in that vital follow-up album.

Gone now is the raw urgency that gave *Too Much Pressure* its appeal. New members Adam Williams (bass) and James Mackie (keyboards) just don't cut it yet against their predecessors. Compare Williams' playing with that of Blockhead Norman Watt-Roy,

The first album remains a classic, perhaps more by intuition and good luck than anything else. The second shows the strain of trying to improve on the first.

There are several R&B covers (Ray Charles, Capitols, Spencer Davis Group), but half the album is original songs by organist Bruce Howard and bassist Trevor Wilson.

In his album notes, Wilson calls it "our first serious attempt at songwriting." Underline "serious". Some of the songs aren't bad, notably the fey 'Rosalie' but the group was more ambitious than successful. Sadly, too, the production wasn't able to match their ambitions.

However, there are some great moments — Borich turns in a creditable 'I Gotta Woman'. But overall it's a much more studied effort than the earlier album. Its failure is that of a great dance band trying for seriousness — check the decline of the Young Rascals on that one. One thing is certain: when the La De Das were hot they cooked up a storm.

Ken Williams

Hits and Myths XSF

There is a long, if sometimes dishonourable tradition of compilation albums in this country. Right from the days of the Loxene Golden Disc records until the early seventies, samplers and compilations were the best guide to the state of health of New Zealand recording. The flowering of the local album market in the last five or six years has somewhat diminished their role, although lately they have resurfaced as a means of exposure for non-established acts.

In the light of that, it is interesting to compare *Hits and Myths* with the recent sixties' sampler, *How Was The Air Up There?* While the latter may bring a nostalgic tear to the eye of a patriot, nobody could suggest that the singles represented there bear any kind of comparison with their British beat boom contemporaries. The seventies' collection, however, is full of world-class tracks.

All of the tracks, except perhaps for those by the Whizz Kids and Schtung, are well-known and the majority were

ENZED CLASSICS



Reps, Zero and Bones

bona fide hits. 'April Sun In Cuba', 'Gutter Black', 'Be Mine Tonight', 'Squeeze', 'Feels So Good' and 'One Good Reason' are all testaments to the high standards of New Zealand singles-making in 1977-80. There is really no point in going over the tracks — everyone has their favourites, and they are bound to be here.

It's ironic that the very improvement in standards which rendered compilation albums pretty much redundant by the mid-seventies is now reflected in this excellent collection. Congratulations to XSF.

Francis Stark

**The La De Das
La De Das/Find Us A Way
Epic**

It's about time someone dug out some of those often-brilliant records that made New Zealand rock what it is. Last year's compilation *How Was the Air Up There* set the ball rolling. Now we have the first two La De Das albums repackaged as a double set.

The La De Das were the ace NZ band of the late sixties. They had hits, big hits, with

radical material — vicious guitar riffs, heavy soul overtones.

The albums, particularly the first one, stand up pretty well, but they show the problems of making a record album.

The first one was probably comparatively easy. Essentially, it was the group's stage act plus a couple of hit singles, 'How is the Air Up There' and 'On Top of the World' (an obscure John Mayall song).

The La De Das played these songs night after night and the best still jump out of the speakers. Phil Key's 'preaching' may have been ersatz, but he had a lot of style. So did all the band. They led the scene musically — and what they wore on stage — tartan trousers, furred boots, epaulettes jackets — was copied religiously.

The album has the La De Das strong interpretations of material by Mose Allison, Muddy Waters, Lee Dorsey, Chris Kenner (a very moody 'Land of a Thousand Dances'), Jimmy Reed, Small Faces, Manfred Mann (Kevin Borich was a Paul Jones imitator for a while) and Sam and Dave.

who guests on two tracks, and see what I mean. Good songs are too often let down by leaden, unimaginative rhythm.

Enough gripes. The song-writing talent is still there. Ska is mixing more with Motown soul now, with good results, especially on 'Deep Water' and 'Red Reflections', where Pauline's singing is sweet and full-bodied. Gaps Hendrickson contributes a sadly beautiful love song in 'Tell Me What's Wrong', while Comi Amanor's 'Bomb Scare' has the right amount of melodic menace, but could have done with less trite lyrics.

The title track is one of Neol Davies' best. Sophistication is the key word here in a tense study of urban warfare. Amanor redeems himself with the dangerous strut of 'Selling Out Your Future', and Williams also gains a point or two. Pauline's 'Bristol And Miami' is sublime. With angry imagery and an aching chorus, she recalls the violence which has plagued both cities, and brings back some of the old punch.

An album you can't write off. The second side makes up for the faults that stand out. A little more time taken could have made it better. Still, The Selector are stepping forward, and for that they can only be applauded.

Duncan Campbell

**Various Artists
Backstage Pass
RTC**

Ten bands, seventeen tracks, and a telling barometer of how things have changed since 1977. Some of the bands here address themselves bravely to social ills and injustices, but musically, this record would have even been rated passe in 1979.

Stiff Little Fingers are both the most mature and the most adventurous on 'Closed Groove' and 'Barbed Wire Love', while the major interest will doubtless centre on the Cockney Rejects, who are predictably Pistols-like on both their offerings. 'Police Car' shows they wouldn't be out of place in a soccer crowd, and on 'Wanna Be A Star', the Rejects not only wanna be stars, but they've named their support band as well (Iggy Pop).

U.K. Subs and Slaughter & the Dogs are two we already know, and they don't spring any surprises. Anti Pasti manage the record's dirtiest guitar sound on an enjoyable crass 'No Government', and Manufactured Romance provide a couple of rare deviations merely through the presence of a lady singer — though their second contribution 'Long Distance Love' isn't bad.

Also present — Angelic Upstarts, Exploited, Bob De Vries and Cyanide.

Roy Colbert



**The Clash
Black Market Clash
Epic**

Clash fans these days need to have faith. Last year was the band's worst both on and off record, and there's the danger that if they don't recover lost purpose they could end up in the no-man's land of almost-making-it.

Keeping that in mind, we have *Black Market*, an American compilation of odds 'n' sods, retailing here at six dollars, that supplies us with an indication as to the Clash's drift and development over the past four years.

1977, their first and most fondly remembered year, is fittingly covered by their original version of 'Capital Radio One', recorded as a freebie for NME readers, 'Cheat', from their first album, and 'City of the Dead', the flip of 'Complete Control'. An exuberant year, and the songs still sound good if a little dated.

1978 is represented by 'The Prisoner', flip side of 'White Man', and the Clash's tribute to McGoonan's TV series. It was another self-produced effort at a time when they were seeking a suitable producer. Later that same year they settled on

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