

**The Beat
Wha'ppen
Go-Feet**

Just Can't Stop It was among the finest albums to be released last year. Classics like 'Hands Off, She's Mine' and 'Mirror in the Bathroom' show-cased the Beat's mastery of tricky words and danceable rhythms. Further proof of their skill came with the intermediate single, 'Too Nice To Talk To', sadly passed over by New Zealand radio.

After a successful debut, it must be tempting to follow the formula. The Beat have avoided this with *Wha'ppen*. Though they retain their original sound, they have kept the songs diverse in style, and distinctly fresh.

'Doors Of Your Heart', the second single from the album, kicks into gear with a blast from Saxa's horn. Dub effects on Ranking Roger's toasting make it a tasty opener. The full pace rocker, 'All Out To Get You', leads nicely into the latin 'Monkey Murders'. On 'I Am Your Flag', added brass gives a soulful feel, while the lyrics prove the Beat's politics don't begin and end with 'Stand Down Margaret'.

'French Toast' adds some Caribbean light relief before 'Drowning' wanders into a rich production job by Bob Sargeant. 'A Dream Home In New Zealand' deals with nuclear war, New Zealand being the last retreat. Of the remaining five songs, only two impress, 'Get A Job' and 'Cheated', but both are potential hit singles.

Although *Wha'ppen* is not as immediately forceful as *Just Can't Stop It*, it is a confident work. Regardless of changing musical fashion, I have no doubt that the Beat can only get stronger.

Mark Phillips

**Magazine
Magic, Murder
and the Weather
Virgin**

Magazine have always been an acquired taste, a band who've blended musical sophistication (when that wasn't the thing to do) with Devoto's own very personalised and figurative



Howard Devoto



The Beat's Ranking Roger.



Jim Carroll



Ray Columbus

world-view.

Their three previous studio albums have veered from the ambitious if flawed *Real Life* through the gothic weightiness of *Secondhand Daylight* to the brisk and accessible moods of *Correct Use of Soap*.

And now *Magic, Murder and the Weather*, again an album of distinct qualities. *Soap* dropped all pretensions, yet it retained the band's inherent drama and imagination. *Magic* continues this anti-melodrama drift into a funkiness and rhythmic buoyancy that they've seldom achieved in the past.

McGeoch's departure after *Soap* was temporarily filled by sound-alike Robin Simon who merely duplicated McGeoch's presence on the live *Play* and when he left, Ben Mandelson, an old associate, was employed. On *Magic* his touches are deft and sparing in contrast to the aggressive chord pressures of McGeoch and his subtleties have left more room for Adamson's ingenuity (he must rank as one of the best bassists anywhere) and Doyle's precision drumming. This difference has given the album more flexibility.

'About the Weather', 'The Honeymoon Killers' and 'The Great Man's Secrets' are all gems, combining the best features of the band — Formula's knack for producing keyboard lines that provide the initial melodic basis for Magazine's

landscapes. 'This Poison', the single, stands out. Devoto beguiling, the band funky. 'Suburban Rhonda' and 'The Garden' insinuate rather than state. And on 'So Lucky' and the 'Naked Eye' Adamson and Doyle run into overtime with style.

So *Magic* is an album of human textures and wisps of Magazine atmosphere. Its propulsion is less intense than its predecessors but its inventiveness remains at the highest of quotients.

But since its release Devoto has left the band which means that Magazine have had their chips. I'll miss them, a lot, especially when they were capable of conjuring up albums the likes of *Magic*.

A minute's silence, perhaps? George Kay

**Ray Columbus
and the Invaders
Anthology
Epic**

For the collector this is pretty much the perfect set. The packaging is excellent, from the beautifully-dated look of the cover photos to the informative, detailed liner notes inside the gatefold.

Add in the inclusion of a live version from Perth of 'She's A Mod' circa 1964, and the first single by Columbus and the Invaders, 'Money Lover', and it's the sort of record oldies'

freaks in Australia will go weak at the knees over.

What's a surprise is how well most of the songs hold up. 'Till We Kissed' is a pop classic that will probably astonish newcomers who only know Columbus as a middle of the road television personality.

The Righteous Brothers' feel of 'Till We Kissed' is not retained on the other 15 tracks, which instead have the raw jumpy sound of mid-60s British beat music.

Generally the local boys hold up better here than, for example, the Kinks 15 years on. Nostalgia may draw some to this album. The music should hold a lot more.

Phil Gifford

**David Lindley
El Rayo-X
Asylum**

The Main Point: This album's given me more sheer fun than almost anything I've heard this year. Whenever it's playing — which is a helluva lot — I'm seized by paroxysms of that good old foot-stompin', back-bone-slippin' funky chicken. Go forth, buy it and get afflicted. Feels soooo good.

The Background Stuff: David Lindley's been around for years. He's played on the better work of such as Linda Ronstadt (in '74) and Rod Stewart (in '75). More significantly, he's been Jackson Browne's guitarist

cum fiddler for the past decade and was an important presence on a couple of Ry Cooder's recent LPs, especially the magnificent *Bop Till You Drop*.

In fact, Cooder's work is the nearest comparison one can find to Lindley's debut. Both musicians share a near-faultless ability to refurbish great songs through a melding of various ethnic and popular styles. Here, for example, old Motown and Everly Brothers' standards are transformed into magnificent reggae; 'Mercury Blues' becomes raging rock'n'roll ... and so on.

Which only accounts for half the album. There's also a superb bunch of new numbers: two co-written by Lindley and three from the bizarre wit of someone named 'Frizz' Fuller.

Despite the considerable diversity here, the overall sound is primarily tex-mex. The band is everything one could wish for and, although handling all guitars and vocals, Lindley never obtrudes as 'star' performer.

One superficial reaction to this album dismissed Lindley as 'doing a Cooder', but the fact is that both men have been steeped in this music for decades. *El Rayo-X* is no gimmicky patiche, but the result of an abiding and irreverent love. It's also an unalloyed delight.

Peter Thomson

**Grace Jones
Nightclubbing
Island**

Grace Jones is an unshamedly sexual animal. She flaunts her sexuality to her own advantage, and some say she lays it on a bit thick, but that's their problem, not hers. Grace is owned by nobody, and in today's hypocritical permissive society, her attitudes are positively healthy.

Nightclubbing takes up where *Warm Leatherette* left off. Sleazy, greasy, dirty funk, with an earthy sophistication that is endearing and very human.

The title track is, of course, the David Bowie/Iggy Pop composition, which Grace deadpans beautifully. If Iggy intended the song to be tongue-in-cheek, then Grace has certainly got the message. She turns Bill Withers' 'Use Me' into a sexual tour de force that its writer never realised, and her own 'Feel Up' is an aural orgasm, full of suggestive vocal backchat and percussive heavy breathing.

Barry Reynolds again helps with a couple of songs, along with Marianne Faithfull, and



plays guitar. Robbie Shakespeare and Sly Dunbar are also present, using the same distinctive rhythmic touches they gave to Black Uhuru's *Sinsemilla*. They lift funk out of the same identikit mire that was threatening reggae.

Grace Jones just slays me. An unforgettable face, a voice like crude oil, and not a hangup in sight.

Duncan Campbell

**The Jim Carroll Band
Catholic Boy
Epic**

Jim Carroll has enjoyed more American rock magazine attention than any new act of the last 12 months. *Catholic Boy* is ostensibly the reason but, in actuality, the focus is more often his background — it's such damn good copy.

Carroll is a 31-year-old poet and ex-junkie, New York street-kid. So what else is new? So Carroll wrote about it as he lived it. His *Basketball Diaries*, from ages 12 to 15, is a fast, absorbingly trashy record of the decline of a wiseass kid with a love of words, sex, and a future as an athlete, into just another hustling doper. Its republishing last year laid the basis for a cult. Even Keef Richard lurched in for a gig.

Carroll, it seems, has known everyone who's hip. It was good friend Patti Smith who first interested him in fusing his poetry with rock. The track 'Crow' is a tribute to her.

Setting aside all notions of street credentials and media hype, is *Catholic Boy* worth the attention? Very definitely. Its precedents lie in the work of Jim Morrison, Iggy, Lou Reed and David Johansen. The band's no-frills approach seems designed to force the words up front, but Carroll's bleak, surreal imagery has an intense instinctual power too. This is rock poetry for the guts first.

Reviewers of *Catholic Boy* have tended to concentrate on the title track, the American single 'People Who Died' and the eerie 'City Drops Into The Night'. These tracks are certainly powerful but by no means overshadow the rest of the album.

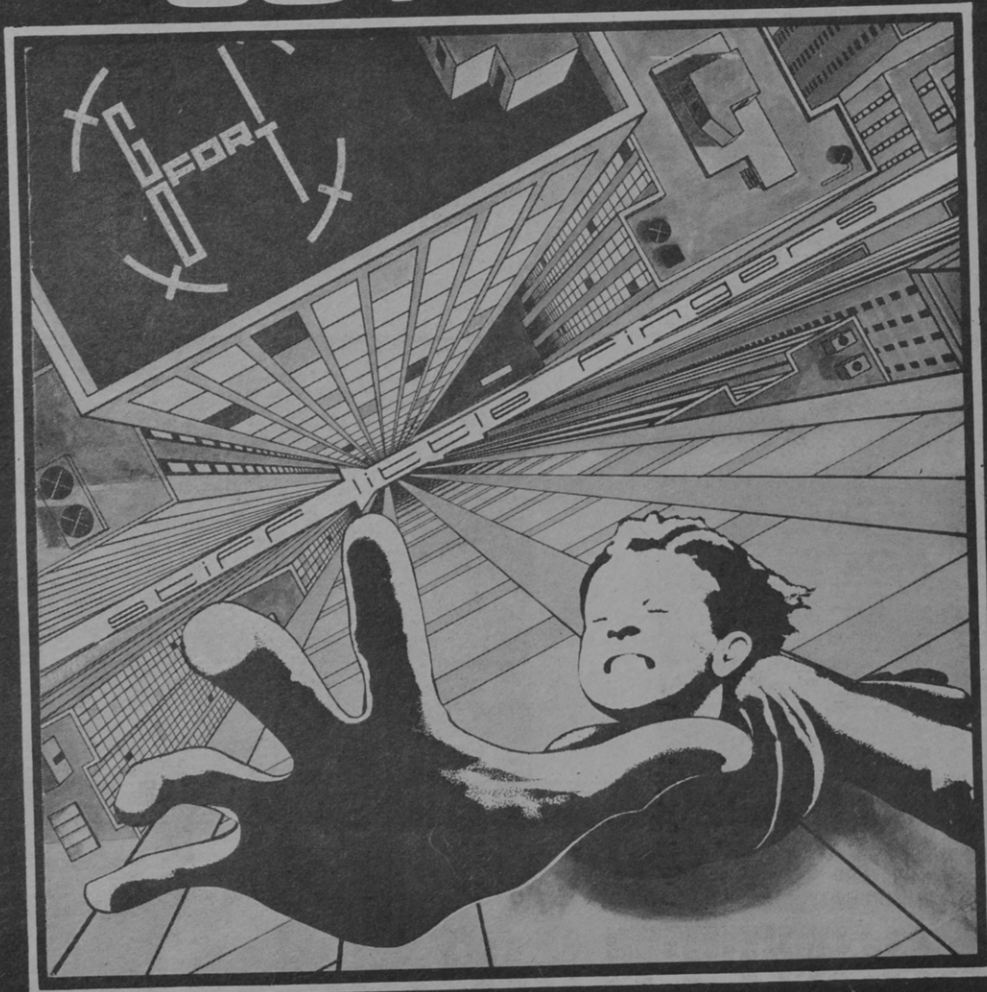
Live, the Carroll Band can be devastating. After a gig in San Francisco, I was exhausted by the amphetamine-paced onslaught of block-chord guitars combined with Carroll's personal mystique.

Whether you regard Carroll as hipster-angel or merely another druggie delinquent, you can't ignore the fact that *Catholic Boy* is dynamite rock'n'roll. It will stand.

Footnote: *Basketball Diaries* is still unavailable in New Zealand. If you're interested then harass your local book-distributor. Carroll's 1974 Pulitzer-nominated volume of poetry, *Living at the Movies* is currently out of print.

Peter Thomson

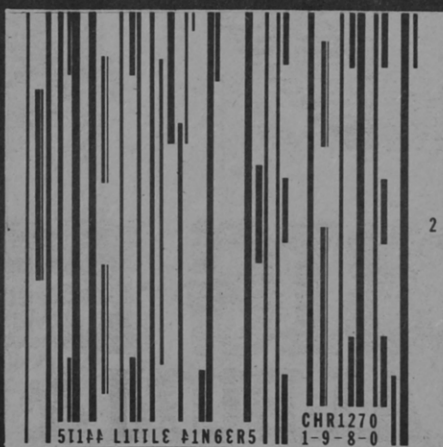
**STIFF
LITTLE
FINGERS
the new album
GO FOR IT**



GO FOR IT



HANX!



**NOBODY'S
HEROES**