

RECORDS

Talking Heads The Name of this Band is Talking Heads Sire

After last year's bout of individuality (with Byrne just edging out the other three) 1982 dawns with the long-promised double live scan of their four peerless studio albums.

Released internationally at the end of the month the album is a fifty-fifty split of the band's development from a four-piece to the later beefed-up ensemble.

Sides One and Two are devoted to the 1977-9 period and as such features the four-piece Heads recorded live in the Northern Studio, Massachusetts and the Capitol Theatre, New Jersey. The arrangements aren't radically different from the studio originals but the performances are effortlessly supple, uncluttered and precise. Byrne's vocals are more up-front, whooping it up on 'Artists Only', 'Stay Hungry', 'Love Goes To A Building On Fire' and the previously unrecorded gem, 'A Clean Break'. Harrison embellishes, adds flesh but it's the pivotal rhythm marriage of Frantz and Weymouth that ensure TH's stature as live necessities.

Sides Three and Four come from dates in America and Tokyo during 1980-81 and cull tracks mainly from *Fear of Music* and *Remain in Light*. The influential extended line-up (Busta Jones, bass; Steve Scales, percussion; Adrian Belew, guitar and Dolette McDonald, vocals) push through



Talking Heads in Enzed

Photo by Terry Hobin

a neat seven minute rendition of 'Houses In Motion' and shored-up funk epics of 'The Great Curve' and 'Crosseyed and Painless'. The album closes with a convincing 'Take me To The River'. What else? British funk owes its life to this outfit.

And that's it. Four sides of great live music. Little that's new but no disappointments. Now where's that new studio album?

George Kay

Various Artists Goats Milk Soap Ripper

Another year, another compilation. In a year where there have been so many good local singles, it's a shame there have been so few albums.

Goats Milk Soap was put together by Bryan Staff and Radio B's Andrew Boak. Their understanding of local music puts this way above Radio Hauraki's *Homegrown*.

The Mockers open Side One with 'Trendy Lefties', one of the most underrated singles of last year. The Swingers' 'Never Never' shows how good they used to be. Next is the Newmatics' 'Playing The Champion', and a duff mix can't hide a good song. So far, so good.

The New Entrants are lyrically and musically so close to the Jam it's hard to take them seriously. However, 'The Kids Are Crying' is catchy. Famous Five are no longer with us, which is a pity, because Clare was one of last year's most promising vocalists. The Instigators' version of 'The Israelites' experiments with dub, but is very ordinary. Last track, Side One, the Toy Love song with the silly title. Not one of their best.

Screaming Meemees blast off Side Two with the nonsense piece 'Pointy Ears'. When you consider this was one of their first recordings (it's a *Class Of '81* out-take),

it's hard to get excited about their more recent output. Danse Macabre, the band most likely, offer 'ECG' from their debut EP. Because of superb production, it's outstanding in this company.

'Ward', by the late Corners, doesn't sit well in context, with its strange, heavy rhythms and squawking sax, but it shouldn't be overlooked. One which should be is the Blue Asthmatics' 'Blue Asthma'; routine twin vocal ska. Bongos supply one of the album's highlights with 'Familiar Strangers'. Gill's keyboards are intriguing, and for a bass-less three-piece, they have a good sound. A band for the future. She Collapsed have already done so, no great loss. Finally, it's Riot III with '1981'. Topical and ragged, this is the year that was.

It's interesting to note that of the 14 bands included, only eight are still together, and three of the tracks were recorded over a year ago. Add that to the fact that there are no South Island bands included, and you have a somewhat arbitrary collection of NZ tracks. Bring on the Flying Nun compilation, I'm getting bored up here.

Mark Phillips

Was (Not Was) Ze Records

In the current climate that has elevated Michael Zilkha's Ze label into the hallowed can-do-no-wrong bracket, we have Don and David Was (Not Was), two Detroit engineers brought up on Frank Zappa and Steely Dan and intent on using their own beefy funk to swipe at the American malaise. They could be around for a while.

Smart quips aside, the Was

brothers have assembled a band that fairly bristles credibility — try to ex MC 5 guitarist Wayne Kramer and a whole gang of Funkadelic, Bootsy's and Tamla talents for size, and you're beginning to get the picture.

The picture is, in fact, the Was reality of an America in dissolution, capitalism in decay with freaks as the scapegoats. Enough? You're not getting off that easily. Regimented housing, the sky's ablaze — it's an attack, are you feeling uncomfortable? Good, well dance to remember, to realise, not forget.

'Out Come The Freaks' is a slip-funk tour of American types — casualties, opportunists and rebels, an ideal lead in to the big fat forlorn ballad, 'Where Did Your Heart Go', lush yet callous. You shiver, 'Tell Me That I'm Dreaming' is no assurance neither is the mock-escapism of 'Carry Me Back To Old Morocco' and certainly not the final assault of 'Go ... Now', some negative call to action.

Not a collection of songs, because on those terms it would fail, but a terse danceable disorientation of American complacency. And like the man said: 'The time is now, that's all we know about.' Confront now, it's your choice. Think about it.

George Kay

The Bureau Only For Sheep WEA

When Dexy's split in late 1980 leaving Kevin Rowland with the name and his ambitions, the instrumental nucleus of the band formed the Bureau, the idea being that they could continue with their soul rebel ways but

without the posturing single-mindedness that has made Rowland a virtual anti-hero.

Archie Brown was brought in on vocals and Rob Jones on guitar to swell the Bureau to a seven piece and they lost no time in releasing 'Only For Sheep'/'The First One', a single of sweat and competency but with the B-side stealing the thunder. Both are on the debut album.

As a first step the album, *Only For Sheep* is an honest, if unsuccessful, attempt at emulating the Stax soul and R&B licks and current British realism that made *Searching For the Young Soul Rebels* the genuine article.

Brown has been left to shoulder the Rowland singing-songwriting chores, and that's a tall order. At his best on the simmering controlled 'Got To Be Now', the rousing up-tempos of 'Let Him Have It' and 'The First One' and Rob Jones's 'Find A Way' and 'Helpless', he makes the grade but there's no way he can equal his predecessor's flamboyant passion or writing flair.

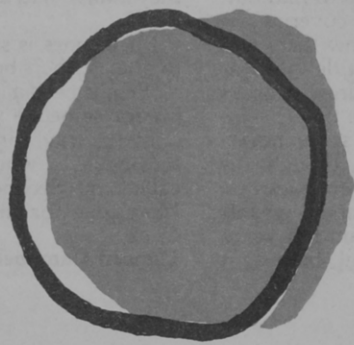
That's the Bureau and *Only For Sheep*, but I hope they keep trying.

George Kay



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