

## RECORDS

**Graham Parker**  
**Another Grey Area**  
Vertigo

What's needed here is a rethink. This is not the Graham Parker we all knew and some of us loved. What we have here is a polite Graham Parker.

On his last album, *The Up Escalator*, Parker drowned in the excesses of Jimmy Iovine's production. Instead of cleaning up Parker's style for the US market, as Iovine was meant to, he blunted the drive and stunted the project. The album flopped, Parker retreated while the Rumour went off to join Garland Jeffreys.

After a two-year break, Parker recorded *Another Grey Area*, with Jack Douglas as executive producer and New York studio musicians like Hugh McCracken and Nicky Hopkins replacing the Rumour's go-for-the-throat approach. In fact it's the polite rock-R&B approach adopted here (close to, say, Bryan Ferry's *The*

*Bridge Stripped Bare*) which is the problem.

Robbed of the intensity and passion the Rumour provided, Parker's torn up runt railing against the world can sound awfully like a whining brat. The standard and stodgy rock rhythms used sink the weaker songs and make those that skip on a lighter reggae beat stand out.

But Parker delivers as strong a set of songs as he's written in some time and that strength ultimately shines through. Commercially, this album might well find itself in the grey area of the title, but artistically at least, it finds Graham Parker back on the right track.

Alastair Dougal

**The League Unlimited Orchestra**  
**Love and Dancing**  
Virgin

An album of dub/dance versions of the best of *Dare* (where's 'Get Carter'), or is this the debut album by producer extraordinaire Martin Rushent, of Pete Shelley, Altered Images and Human League fame?

He's taken the best of the *Dare* album, eight songs in all, and added, altered, subtracted until he's come up with, not worse or better, but alternative versions. And the surprise is that these are just as valid as the originals.

As basic tracks for songs, one does actually cut the original. 'Seconds' here is much more powerful, with amplified shot and delayed echo. 'Don't You Want Me' is rendered listenable again after the blanket radio coverage it received, but 'Do or Die' still sounds like a filler. Not even Rushent can hide a duff tune.

Warning: 'Hard Times/Love Action', 'Don't You Want Me' and 'Open Your Heart' are the same dub versions from the respective 12-inch singles.

Barry Morris

**T-Rex**  
**Sold Gold Easy Action**  
EMI

Have you got T-Rextasy? Here's ten pins from the Bolan alley and on the other side, ten more! Twenty (almost!) hits from the man who made the



Steve Winwood

early 70s listenable. Everything you always wanted to hear from the Electric Sliding Warrior, plus 'I Love To Boogie' (1976), which no one in their right mind would want to hear twice.

I've got a sneaky feeling (two bucks for the plug, boys) there's an obvious hit missing, but I'm probably wrong. There's nothing from *Zinc Alloy*, but who needs that stuff, only yer trueblue, hardcore, walleyed Feldmaniac, who's already got it (and knows what 'Feldmaniac' means). Everyone else can rest content with 'Ride A White Swan' through to *Tanx*-period stuff, which is covered reasonably thoroughly.

The cover's a mess and the liner notes are useless, but the music's good. This, *Electric Warrior* and *The Slider* would be a good place to start.

Chris Knox

**The Sunnyboys**  
**Individuals**  
Mushroom

Underestimating the Sunnyboys is a mistake easily made, well that's my excuse. After wrongly dismissing their 'Happy Man' inclusion on the *South Pacific* compilation, their two subsequent singles, 'Alone With You' and 'You Need A Friend', proved that they were much more than just summer pop or

dumb revisionists.

Sure, musically they've taken their cue from the Flamin' Groovies 'Shake Some Action' (listen to 'No Love Around' on *Individuals*, it's as close to 'Action' as you'd get without piling up law suits) but for current pop there's no finer launching pad than past Groovies classics.

Guitarist and vocalist Jeremy Oxley writes the songs and *Individuals* is their second album. His best songs are full of teenage angst, what else? 'Individuals' is identity crisis, baby, and a good tune; 'You Need A Friend' is a gem, a real plea of inadequacy ('I cannot help and I cannot share and I cannot follow') and 'It's A Sunny Day' and 'I'm Not Satisfied' are full of self-doubt, bitterness and even irony. This is pop.

The rest of the album though is pretty lame. 'Days Are Gone' and 'You Don't Need Me' are catchy but insubstantial. 'This Is Real', 'Leaf On A Tree' and 'Colour of Love' don't really get off the ground.

So it's only a good album but the best of *Individuals* is true pop from the heart.

George Kay

**Jimi Hendrix**  
**The Jimi Hendrix Concerts**  
CBS

Once and for all, this superb double album of live material should confirm Jimi Hendrix as the 'genius/innovator' who altered the 'understanding' of guitar playing for his time and there after.

Hendrix's role in changing the perception of his instrument — and of music as a whole — was not dissimilar to the influence on the saxophone of Lester Young in the 30s and Charlie Parker in the 40s. That statement may anger some and mystify others, but the proof is in the grooves.

Compiled from tapes from 1968-70 and 'produced' by Alan Douglas (no signs of studio tomfoolery, just an incredibly gutsy sound), this is the album fans of Hendrix the musician have been hoping for.

The cover sticker promises new versions of 'Hey Joe', 'Stone Free' and 'Voodoo Child', only the Hendrix completist would have many of these renditions already.

And all are 'new' in the sense that even such warhorses as 'Fire' and 'Red House' are given stimulatingly fresh treatments. 'Little Wing' never sounded so mellow, nor 'Voodoo Child' so storming. And 'Bleeding Heart' is simply one of the best examples of blues guitar playing ever. Perhaps only 'Wild Thing', with its destruction orgy, suffers the rigours of time.

Does it qualify as album of the year?

Ken Williams

**Steve Winwood**  
**Talking Back To The Night**  
Island

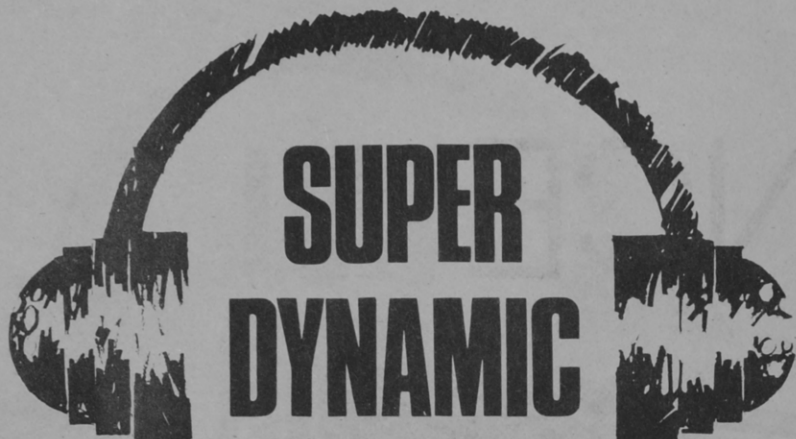
Steve Winwood's previous album, *Arc of the Diver*, re-established his reputation after a long spell in the cold following the demise of Traffic. Combining with a number of lyricists, Winwood produced a varied album of catchy melodies and foot-tapping tunes, highlighted by the Jennings/Winwood songs 'Night Train' and 'While You See A Chance'.

This time around, Winwood has plumped for a complete collaboration with Jennings and the results are not entirely satisfactory. The freshness and vitality of *Diver* has given way to an overall bland presentation of synthesised funk and milky ballads. As with the Elton John/Bernie Taupin partnership, this one is also running into problems. At times the stilted lyrics seem to have led to the music being tailored to fit.

However, there are some saving graces. The title track almost captures the urgency of 'Night Train', 'There's A River' is a fine gospel-tinged ballad and 'Valerie' has all the credentials for a successful single, with Winwood's voice in fine fettle. 'Still In The Game' drives along, with Jennings' best lyrics on the album, giving Winwood room to manoeuvre. There's A Candle Burning' is saved by an exquisite keyboard arrangement, while 'And I Go' hints of Traffic days.

A somewhat disappointing follow-up. There are no risks taken here. While the album may well emulate the sales success of its predecessor, can we afford the 'Play it again, Sam' sound in 1982?

David Perkins



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*The Collection 1977-1982*

*the stranglers*

SIDE ONE

(GET A) GRIP (ON YOURSELF) 1977

PEACHES 1977

HANGING AROUND 1977

NO MORE HEROES 1977

DUCHESS 1979

WALK ON BY 1978

WALTZINBLACK 1981

SIDE TWO

SOMETHING BETTER CHANGE 1977

NICE 'N' SLEAZY 1978

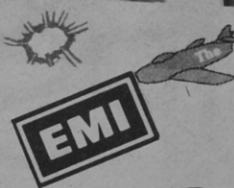
BEAR CAGE 1980

WHO WANTS THE WORLD 1980

GOLDEN BROWN 1981

STRANGE LITTLE GIRL 1982

LA FOLIE 1981



ORIGINAL RECORDINGS

**16 TRACKS**

C-30 C-60 C-90 GO

I Want My Baby  
On Mars

LOUIS  
Quatorze

Sun, Sea and Piracy

Uomo Sex Al Apache  
THEME A

Sexy Eiffel Towers

Fools Rush In

Radio G-String  
Giant Sized  
Baby Thing