



SINGLES BAR

The Perfect (Some Bizarre) 12"

Matt Johnson, who recently suffered an eye infection (better than a split lip) wrote this song some time ago. Its anti-nuclear stance becomes relevant considering what's happening in Europe and its pleasant melody rides the desolation the lyrics predict. Ex NY Doll David Johansen guests on the harmonica, a instrument rarely associated with synth epics. Did nothing in England but looks set to be a hit in NZ — just shows they don't have all the good taste.

Simple Minds

Waterfront (Virgin) 12"

I could say this has been a long time coming but that would be an understated cliché. I think this will probably be the single that breaks Simple Minds in America. Yes, it is that bad. Worse than a punch from a bouncer.

Public Image Ltd

This is Not a Love Song

(Virgin) 12"

Not another great white whale (wail)! I've been waiting for this single for months — why, I don't know. Unadventurous, grinding guitar, inane chanting and precious little else mean J. Lydon better think again. Not only that, they've put 'The Public Image' on this four-track EP. Makes you wonder what happened in the five

years inbetween.

NV, It's Alright (Sire)

Hot on New York radio at the moment, NV get an automatic local release. Sharp dance mobility for fast feet and open-minded heads. Slick production from a couple of unknowns, don't allow it to linger. A life saver.

The Models

I Hear Motion (Mushroom)

These blokes played the Windsor the other week. It seemed to me they had only one song. Lucky for them, this is it. Nice chorus that niggles under your skin and a slick sound that wavers between your ears. Ultimately, more Simple Minds than Simple Minds, but when the Scots don't produce the goods they leave themselves wide open. I mean, take that geezer the Arsenal just bought. If he can't score the goals then what do you ...

The Rocksteady Crew

Hey You (Charisma) 12"

Strange thing, dance. It seems the people who do it best also know how to make the best records for doing it to. Dance crew the Rock Steadys had a huge hit with this and nobody is surprised. Voluptuous feet movement memento that will stay with us forever. A hit in 92 different languages.

The Special AKA

War Crimes (Chrysalis)

This one is now well over a year old. If it wasn't an essential addition to the collection I'd have said don't bother to release it. No radio station will play this weird and wonderfully deep mini-classic, but if you ever even half respected Jerry Dammers you have to have it.

The Johnnys

I Think You're Cute (Regular)

The Johnnys are a bunch of

nurds in cowboy hats. Not only that, they're Australians. This is an absolutely stupid ditty, impossible to take seriously, which is just as well, because I don't think it was meant to be. Mental as Anything go to Texas.

Before I go I'd just like to ask why there aren't any Christmas records. 'Jingle Smells' by the Exploited — anything! Mark Phillips

the SHAKE Summation

Big Sideways

Let It Out (Unsung)

A fun, if lightweight, bit of pop that hits a groove and bowls along in it with the odd tasty injection of trumpet from Mike Russell. Summery stuff, even if the lyrics grate a bit. 'No Rush Dorothy' is lively Calypso nonsense and 'Bright, Clean, New and Brave' is a poor attempt at a rap sort of thing.

Bottletops

The World is Jivin' (Onset-Offset)

Yeah, I know it's been out for ages but we hacks tend to get complacent and wait for things to get dropped at our doorsteps. I'd expected a fairly amiable jumble but this is genuinely quirky. With unique singing, it's sometimes funny, sometimes passionate and occasionally unnerving, all in a small sort of way. An ideal antidote to commercial radio. And 13 tracks!

Diatrobe

Too Lazy (Warrior)

Diatrobe can be pretty flat on stage but this record shows them

off to much better effect. The skash 'Too Lazy', however, sounds a bit contrived and isn't really a good opener. 'Shakedown' is better but it's the EP's two sparser songs that really work. On 'Dangerous Game' Peter Kirkbride provides a nice vocal and simple but effective guitar over some smart rhythms, while 'Gift of Cruelty' (from the Patu soundtrack) delivers its message with a fine balance of drama and grace.

Coconut Rough

As Good As It Gets (Mushroom)

Eh? Three minutes and 31 seconds that wander past in spectacularly ungratifying fashion. To be fair, half the problem is Dave Marrett's seemingly staple bland, seamless production. It wouldn't be nearly so annoying if Coconut Rough didn't keep up this "Polynesian Pop" pretence (see sleeve). This is about as Polynesian as the last Air Supply single.

Marie and the Atom

Yellow Read Aloud (Flying Nun)

This isn't yer average kiwi rock single. A personal, bold, beautifully executed five-track EP that is part of a larger theatrical performance. Gill Civil and Virginia Were play various instruments and share vocals. They're helped out by various friends, including a string section. I can't claim a complete understanding of this record but my favourite track is ISOL, for its singing. It would be a pity if this didn't reach beyond the usual crowd that bothers to buy local "alternative" records because its scope is wider than that.

Ballon D'essai

Ballon D'essai Grow Up (Flying Nun)

Ballon D'essai have always had an odd sort of appeal that often

puts them only a hair's breadth away from being crap when in fact they can be great. Unfortunately it has proved hard to translate that appeal to vinyl. The best of the seven tracks here is 'Armchair Tourists', demented, mocking and about not going places. But others I recognise from live performance, like 'Why?' don't quite come across. But the only actual bad song is 'Simon Says' and the superb cover and big comic inside are almost worth the purchase price on their own. 'Grow Up', the title says — I think the music that gave us the Mutant Hop is still maturing. Keep an ear on it.

Monte Video

Sheba She Sha Shoo (White Label)

Well it's damn clever and it's well produced (with a filthy great bass synth sound) and it will probably be a hit. I'd have no objection to this sort of thing if it didn't keep real music out of things like the Music Awards (I mean, Best Male Vocalist?) Actually, the best joke is that the title's spelled wrong on the cover art — check it!

Auckland Walk

I Wasn't Thinking (WEA)

The band that has won the hearts of the nation's teenies, not to mention the odd video recorder. The bell-like keyboard motif is a nice touch but the plodding beat, irritatingly mannered vocals and banal lyrics add up to an unpleasant experience. The flip, 'Never Gave Up' is lighter but the vocals spoil it again.

Bronx

One Foot Over the Line (Vertigo)

Brighter than 'Streetfighters' but all set to a stupefying rhythm. It's not exactly original either.

Tama Band

Running' and Hidin' (Maui)

A fairly pleasant, cruisy affair

with nice guitar, both rhythm and lead. The B-Side is a bit more bluesy and I like it more.

Radio Active

Angela (Crystal)

Radio Active sound like (well, probably are) one of those New Wave Rock Groups who started popping up two or three years ago. Almost enlivened (but not quite) by a lead break that reaches for the heights scaled by the one in 'Another Girl Another Planet' it sounds like a less pompous Flight X-7 over a Narcs bassline. Quite clever on its own terms, I suppose.

Shane

Total Man (WEA)

A bold shot at up-to-dateness. But 5 min 21 sec of electronic trickery can't disguise a basically old-fashioned song.

Split Enz

Strait Old Line (Mushroom)

An elegantly executed swingish little thing that's hummable without being exciting. The flip, 'Parasite' is a bit stranger. It's another Tim Finn confessional that steps away from the whole-some vocal approach that the Finn brothers have been providing since True Colours. Still, it's 'Strait Old Line' that'll sell it.

Taste of Bounty

Party Time (Maui)

Taste of Bounty represent the curious mix of soul and heavy metal which seems unique to this country. Side One is the lighter side, featuring 'Party Time', which is about just what it says and the rather clichéd 'Love 'em and Leave 'em Man'. The flip is the heavy side, with 'White Sandshoes' and the angry instrumental 'Patu'. Within the group's own terms, a qualified success.

Russell Brown

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Eric Android would like to thank all those who kept in touch while he was on holiday in Club Parry. Hi Baine & friends.

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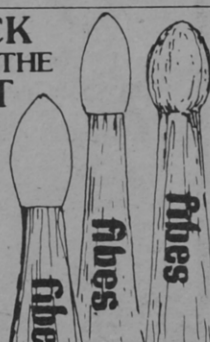
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