



recording role on bass as well as she did her live one.

But *King* is by no means great. The rest of the tracks burble along like a bunch of B-sides.

Star was the built up frustration of being in Kristin's creative shadow for years (and then Kim Deal's in the Breeders). It had to be brilliant to prove them wrong, and it was. *King* feels without form. The pop joy that permeated their songs in the past sounds laboured this round. Sometimes it's just absent. Here's hoping *King* is just a stumbling block.

JOHN TAITE

WEEZER Weezer (Geffen)

Weezer are four boys who make music that's as catchy as the clap, and has plenty of sing along, ooh-ee-oh bits you can grinningly chant with your pals. Try it! It's fun. The vocals often work in shouty, three part harmonies, which is rather endearing. Guitars? Yep! Plenty — even the odd solo, if you please. And anybody who's been within eyeshot of a telly during the past few months will be able to vouch for the drumming, thanks to way cool drummer Patrick Wilson, whose unusual dance moves are the focal point of the 'Undone — the Sweater Song' video.

Apart from sweaters, subject matter covers girls, the garage, workers, Ace Frehley, surfing... basically all the stuff that counts to your

everyday young dude in the 90s. Oh, and Buddy Holly. Lead singer Rivers Cuomo (with a name like that, this guy should go into the cabaret business) has got a cool voice too. It comes on all cheery and benign, but don't OD on the cheese, 'cause before you know it he's rockin' out and riddled with angst. Spin it lots and you'll see what I mean.

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Louder — A BFM Compilation (Festival)

There's more to making a great album than bundling together a number of strong tracks from a disparate bunch of performers. That's always been the problem with compilation packages, such as this offering from Auckland's student radio station, bFM. But if they tend to lack something in coherence, they at least serve as a useful taster for those artists included. And, unless your ears happen to be painted on, few introductions should be needed for *Louder's* assembled roster.

From the eastern mystique of African Headcharge's opening track, 'Heading To Glory', through the obvious indie reference points of perennial fav's Dinosaur Jr. and Sugar, to a healthy dollop of local fare, *Louder* sounds like a bFM broadcast, without the deejays. (It's interesting to note the absence of any English offerings of the indie persuasion — is that John Taite I hear wailing and gnashing

his teeth?). Of course an album that covers so much stylistic ground can't be all things to all people. Personally I find *The Puddle* as wet as their name would suggest, and the inclusion of Thorazine Shuffle's 'Clutter' is perhaps best viewed as an act of charity by a benevolent god-parent. On the plus side is the inclusion of Breast Secreting Cake's simply wonderful and otherwise unavailable 'All The Cars'.

Overall there's a lot to like on *Louder*, although the vintage of some of the tracks means it would have sounded that much more essential in 1994, rather than 1995. Not so much instant karma as instant nostalgia.

MARTIN BELL

SLASH'S SNAKEPIT

It's Five O'Clock Somewhere (Geffen)

Having added a few noteworthy contributions to other people's albums (Lenny Kravitz, Michael Jackson, Bob Dylan etc.) we would expect Slash's solo record to be a bit different to Guns N' Roses, and interesting mainly for that reason. Unfortunately this isn't really the case, as almost all of G N' R are playing on here anyway, so it does sway the bias in that direction. Slash is also having a go at the old electrified southern rock thing, which seems to be quite popular with lead guitarists lately, but doesn't work with this group. For instance, when singer Eric Dover isn't doing Axl replacement, he ends up sounding like a dead ringer for Jon Bon Jovi. That's probably why the best track is an instrumental 'Jizz Da Pitt', co-written by Ozzy and Alice In Chains bassist Mike Inez. But even that doesn't break up the 70 minutes of rock same-ness. It could possibly be five O'clock in Japan, but then again maybe Slash needs to check his watch.

GEOFF DUNN

MORRISSEY World of Morrissey (EMI)

The new Mozz compilation is a haphazard dog's breakfast if ever there was one: 'Boxers' and its two B-sides, three live tracks from *Beethoven Was Deaf*, two tracks from *Your Arsenal*, two tracks from *Vauxhall* and that old chestnut 'Last of the Famous International Playboys'.

It's worth getting for the cover of 'Moon River', all 10 minutes of it, which really is spec-

tacular. The original version of 'The Loop' is a good ole bit of rockabilly, and 'My Lovelife', which was a blueprint for a lot of *Vauxhall* (but got lost when he went off with his *Arsenal*) is finally available.

Not so much the *World of Morrissey*, or even the best of. It's a Christmas biscuit sampler with a couple of digestives and a couple of Tim-Tams from his latest albums.

JOHN TAITE

YOU AM I Hi Fi Way (Warners)

Fuck Oasis. They say Oasis are the 'new Beatles'. How can this be when You Am I are two trillion times better. Liam or Noel what's-his-name try to do what Tim Rogers does so well — write simple, emphatic lyrics that work and don't look silly. Unlike Oasis, Tim Rogers can pull off a finely crafted pop song around the words: 'I wasn't thinkin' / Over boiled beans and chicken' ('Minor Byrd').

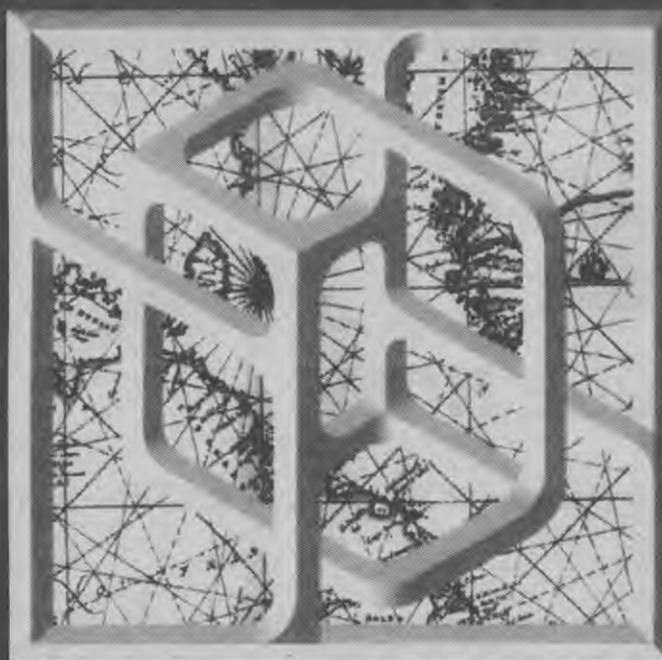
Recorded in New York, with Sonic Youth's Lee Ranaldo producing, *Hi Fi Way* is a myriad of finely tuned, meticulous pop songs, with many a hook to get under yer skin. It's stung with lyrics reeking of suburbia and all that it holds: girls, food, day jobs, beer, a bit more beer and some drinking too ('Pizza Guy', 'She Digs Her'), interspersed with ballads that make your heart sore ('Handwasher', 'Purple Sneakers'), and of course there's the 'punk' and 'rocky' numbers ('Punkarella', 'Ken', the Mother Nature's Son', 'The Applecross Wing Commander'), to snap you from your daydream, and remind you what rock 'n' roll is for... (insert your own reason).

Flawless — hold it tight to your chest.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

THE THE Hunky Panky (Epic)

Hunky Panky is the first in an occasional series of albums The The intend to release in celebration of the great singer/songwriters. Hank Williams is affection target number one. After the disappointment that was *Solitude* (wherein The The may have got the tribute ball rolling prematurely by reinterpreting their own works, to rather ill effect) this short, but bitter sweet recording is a triumphant return to form. An added bonus to bear in mind is that it is



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