



sure to send a whole new chapter of the curious in search of the Hank Williams catalogue.

There are few songwriters this century who have expressed the deep ache of loneliness and the longing for love as darkly and sweetly as Hank Williams,' Matt Johnson writes in the liner notes. I wonder if this notorious depressive realises he is a member of this very same heartbreak hotel, making him the perfect helmsman for a project such as this.

Although the songs are covers, they bear all the trademarks of The The classics. The lyrics, however, and Williams' impeccable sense of rhyme ('There's a tear in my beer, 'cause I'm crying for you dear,' being my favourite) remain authentic. No wonder The The picked 'I Saw The Light' over 'I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry', for they certainly have seen it with this album.

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

ECHOBELLY Everybody's Got One (Rhythm King)

Raves overseas, stupid name, the usual. Who the hell are Echobelly then? A star-studded pedigree, with Curve's live guitarist (Debbie Smith) and PJ Harvey's old drummer (Andy Henderson), sure. An English band full of rock-pop, not obsessed with the past, yeah. But Echobelly is Sonya — Sonya Aurora Madan,

a water nymph with cast iron guts and bionic vocals. She's the strength of PJ Harvey one moment and the softness of Harriet Wheeler (the Sundays) the next.

They've been rightly compared to plenty of bands. 'Cold Feet Warm Heart' has a 'Back To the Old House', Smiths-esque mandolin. 'Close...' but has a definite rockabilly feel, a la solo Mozz, and 'Taste of You' has more than just an echo of Tanya Donnelly's Belly to it. That's not even mentioning the vocal similarities to Björk, amongst others. But the tunes are there and, if you're not some purist that whinges on about bands sounding similar to their influences, there's plenty of reasons to give EGO a go.

JOHN TAITE

NEW YORK DOLLS Rock and Roll (Polygram)

At present *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is touring New Zealand. To some, all that woof-terism and cross dressing may be a bloody good laugh, but not me. To me that hanky panky's downright unnatural. What's worse is decent Kiwis are going out and lapping it up. I doubt they'd find it all so funny if they knew the sort of degenerates who inspired it all. Rest assured coppers, I'm gonna expose everything (not myself ya dirty rotters).

Back in '72, a bunch of jokers in New York (hence name) thought it'd be pretty outrageous to dress up like sheilas. Well, they were right. It was outrageous, not to mention disgusting. Now, your average punters at the time, recognising degeneracy when they saw it, steered well clear of the Dolls and their music. Hence, only two albums were ever released; the self titled debut and *Too Much Too Soon*. Now these two platters that mattered have been compiled onto one itty bitty disk, with three never before heard tracks. To be fair, there's nuthin' much wrong with the music, heaps of it sounds like the Stones (straight up blokes). The singer fella, David Johansen, even looks like Mick Jagger, and the guitarist chappie, Johnny Thunders (RIP), was a figure of inspiration to many young punkers. Mr Thunders was a great enough guitarist not to bother wanking off like the poxy prog rockers around at the time, instead content to keep it nice and simple, apart from a couple of scorching solos. To add some spice the Dolls would put in killer harmonica lines, played by Mr Johansen, or maybe have a piano thumping away (Jerry Lee Lewis style, not Dick Clayderman). Whining away over the top of all this primitive rock and

roll would be Mr Johansen, with his tales about 'Trash', 'Pills' and 'Babylon' — the lyrics paying homage to the sordid lifestyles of these rouged rotters. So far this lifestyle has managed to account for three of the original band. Here's hoping the royalties from this compilation will buy enough nose candy to see a New York Dolls reunion. In Hell.

KEVIN LIST

CARTER USM Worry Bomb (EMI)

Sometimes I don't know why I bother about Carter — preaching to the converted and all that. There's a handful of fans out there, you know the ones, still wearing their '30-Something' T-shirts to the mosh pits. The truth is old Jim Bob and Fruit Bat are an awfully English acquired taste. But their cunning sex (sells) machine has certainly got 'Let's Get Tattoos' in the music channels.

Now with real drummer Wez, they've lost a lot of their plinkity plonkity feel (thank fuck!), and the rather serious, pop-less misery which even alienated student radio (*Post Historic Monsters*), is now well behind them. The two singles alone ('Tattoos' and 'Young Offender's Mum') proved that. Lyrically, their little word plays are still bobbing about ("You say Karl / I say Harpo / I'm politically incorrectable"), but musically they've changed. Someone must have given them some guitar lessons because 'Cease Fire' and 'God, St. Peter and the Guardian Angel' are almost like proper rock songs. 'Defeatist Attitude' is Carter unplugged. True! As for the rest, it's a huge leap for Carter-kind. The machine's back on track.

JOHN TAITE

SICK OF IT ALL Scratch the Surface (Eastwest)

Yes, I am sick of it all. I'm sick of monotonous bands who play million-mile-an-hour music, filled with standard metal/rock progressions, and call it hardcore just because some guy is bellowing something very boring over the top of it at a constant pitch for about an hour. There are no dynamics, there are no peaks, there is no emotion, this is bog standard. In fact, about 10 years ago this could have been remarkable — but it wouldn't have been because there were thousands of bands who sounded like this 10 years ago.

And there are baking vocals, which always sound anthemic and phoney in hardcore — like football chants. That macho team mentality

again.

The guitarist plays your standard issue US hardcore guitar — a Gibson SG of course. He doesn't do much exciting with it however. Too much speed, not enough power. To quote Sick Of It All: 'If the substance lacks it's plain for all to see.' So true. Waffle, waffle, blah, blah... even this review is boring. But here comes an interesting part...

The first person to send an abusive letter to *Rip It Up* about this review will get this CD sent to them free! Send your entries on the back of an envelope or on a postcard to: Sick Of Your Crap Reviews, *Rip It Up*, PO Box 5689, Wellesley St, Auckland.

JEREMY CHUNN

THE WEDDING PRESENT Watusi (Island)

JULIAN COPE Autogeddon (Liberation)

Two acts superficially incompatible, but they share a maverick vision and it's sorta ironic to have Cope in the same column as Wedding Present's Island label — the company that dumped Cope for not shifting too many units.

Not that David Gedge and the Wedding Present have been feverishly popular. With their hardcore, Albini phase well behind them, their 12 singles in a year campaign sharpened their sensibilities for *Watusi* — a celebration of the gawkiness, immediacy and splendour of pop. The portable hair drier and record player on the sleeve indicate where Gedge's head is at present, and this is borne out in the instantly digestible, retro-pop of 'Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah', 'Swimming Pools', 'Movie Stars' and 'Hot Pants'. *Watusi* revels in the disposability of 60s culture. Enjoy it.

By comparison, Cope's angle is futuristic. Forget Armageddon, here's Autogeddon, his final epistle in a trilogy on the ailing planet earth that began with *Peggy Suicide*. As on the previous two, Cope's visions and eccentricities are given full reign, but his indulgences are far from tedious or inaccessible.

He slips from the unclassifiable rock and country idiosyncrasies of 'Paranormal', to the original, plaintive views of 'Armageddon Blues' and the brilliantly structured,

stratospheric eight minute guitar solo of 'Starcar'. Just a selection from an album that again proves Cope's integrity and imagination are untouchable.

GEORGE KAY

SOUND BITES

SILVERCHAIR - FROGSTOMP



Stunning debut album from Newcastle's finest sons. Contains the smash hit singles 'Tomorrow' and 'Pure Massacre'. Get one for your little sister and get one for yourself.



DIONNE FARRIS - WILD SEED - WILD FLOWER

A fascinating collage of funk, soul, jazz and blues from the fabric of this special debut from the former Arrested Development vocalist. Features the hot new single 'I Know'.

OTTMAR LIEBERT - EUPHORIA

Two musical worlds collide and merge as Ottmar Liebert's distinctive flamenco style gets a reworking by some of his favourite remixers. Features mixes by Steve Hillage, Aki from Nation/Fundamental, DJ Slip and Eye Q.

CRITTERS BUGGIN - GUEST

Freshman release from Stone Gossard's new label Loosegrooves is the instrumental weird of Critters Buggin. Crazy loops and jams edited into nine freak out tracks make *Guest* compulsive listening!



THE LIGHTNING SEEDS - JOLLIFICATION

More perfect pop from legendary Bunneymen producer Ian Broudie. Packed full of more hooks than an anglers convention, this latest collection is the Lightning Seeds best to date. Features the singles 'Change', 'Lucky You' and 'Marvellous'.



MAD SEASON - ABOVE

A sound that began as a jam session among friends has evolved into a startling new band. Mad Season features Pearl Jam's Mike McCready, Screaming Trees' Barrett Martin and Alice In Chains' Lane Stanley. A powerful blend of rock and blues, with an identity of its own.



THE THE - HANKY PANKY

Celebrating the work of the legendary Hank Williams Sr., truly one of the most influential singer/songwriters of the 20th century. Sparsely arranged, and brimming with religious fervour, these emotionally charged, dusky tunes will have you weeping before sundown.



THE BOO RADLEYS - WAKE UP

The follow up to the universally acclaimed *Giant Steps* album. 12 brilliant tracks that hijack the senses as only the Boo Radleys can. The 'pet sounds' of the '90s? You be the judge.