



Cold Water Flat

loser loser!'). It's throwaway, but it's fun and poppy, and you consistently get what you expect from this bratty young sex machine.

As for Salad, well, they've got all the mid 80s indie components: the female singer, the average guitar, the odd fiddly keyboard. If I was in an unfair mood I'd say they sound like a pub band that thought too much of the Darling Buds and the Primitives, and who will soon be following the aforementioned into obscurity. Singer (and, as the press kit says like it meant something, 'former model'), Marijane van der Vlugt, is Dutch and boring. There's no sex, no power, no pain to her or her band, just boredom.

Salad. They're crap.

JOHN TAITE

**CHRIS WHITLEY** *Din of Ecstasy*  
(Columbia)

Anyone familiar with Whitley's debut, *Living With the Law*, may have some difficulty recognising their beloved blues-tinged singer/songwriter in the dark morass which is *Din of Ecstasy*.

Like Neil Young's *Tonight's the Night*, John Cale's *Music For A New Society* and Lou Reed's *Take No Prisoners*, it's an album of dazed, deliberate pain — sprung apparently from Whitley's drug addiction (his version of Jesus and the Mary Chain's junkie anthem 'Some Candy Talking' is suitably poignant) and divorce from his wife (the sleeve features extracts from love letters to her). Musically, it's closer to Husker Du than Son House — dense, seething guitars, with the vocals buried in the mix, no lush soundscapes to sweeten things. It's the sort of sound one suspects our own Straitjacket Fits attempted to capture for *Blow*. Only the acoustic 'New Machine' harks back to the Whitley of old. This time it's a shaky, spidery update of Robert Johnson's *Terraplane Blues*, where sex offers no salvation, just more problems 'beneath the blanket where the world is', as Whitley puts it.

Never an easy album to listen to (self loathing's funny that way), it is a record of raw torment, unlikely to trouble the Billboard Top 40, but one which, given time, will age with grace and a weird sort of dignity.

GREG FLEMING

**COLD WATER FLAT** *Cold Water Flat*  
(Fort Apache/MCA)

Not so much power pop as buzz-saw pop, Cold Water Flat take their musical cues from the likes of 80s giants Husker Du. Lead singer/guitarist Paul Janovitz certainly has a touch of (Bob) Mould about his vocal chords, and likewise shares Mould's ability to generate some wonderfully searing guitar lines. This is not to suggest plagiarism — it's merely that the best moments on this remarkably assured debut album are worthy of such comparison.

'Numb' builds to the sort of guitar driven climax that re-invests a tired and over used word like 'epic' with some sort of relevance. 'Virus Road' and 'Rescue Lights', meanwhile, churn along memorably on a seething bed of fuzzed out guitars, topped with pristine melodies. Also included is the glorious 'Magnetic North Pole', the band's contribution to Fort Apache's recent introductory sampler *This Is Fort Apache*. Able to hold its head high amongst some very esteemed company on that compilation, Cold Water Flat here prove that 'Magnetic North

Pole' was no fluke, by producing a debut album full of bruised beauty and honest, ragged appeal. Play it loud. You won't be disappointed.

MARTIN BELL

**ALLEGIANCE** *Destitution*  
(Phonogram)

Every month some guy from Brisbane writes a letter to *HM Monthly* that goes something like this: 'Jeez I'm pissed Allegiance aren't getting the attention they deserve. Mate, these guys are the best ##### metal band in the world and dinkim Aussies to boot. Blah, blah, koala buggery, blah. C'mon Aussies, get in behind these blokes and show the woofers that make up the rest of the planet that Aussies rock hardest.'

At last, Bruce from Brisbane's dream has come true, leaving wowzers everywhere aghast at just how darn heavy Allegiance are, and pondering how they got to be so darned fantastic. Perhaps at one time Allegiance played the circuits as visionaries like Bjorn Again, maybe calling themselves Beer 'n' Telly 'n' Cars. Then possibly some genius figured they'd make more dosh as an original band, thus unleashing *Destitution* on us.

Anyway, the stereo's reeking of black jeans and white sneakers, but is that a foul or fragrant smell? What's wrong with sounding (a lot) like Metallica and, most importantly, if a wood chuck could chuck wood would he? Over to you Bruce...

KEVIN LIST

**VARIOUS ARTISTS** *Encomium: A Tribute to Led Zeppelin* (Atlantic)

Led Zeppelin may have ceased to exist in 1980, but the legend continues forever. With Jimmy Page and Robert Plant reunited, and touring their amazing *No Quarter* album, the time is ripe for a Zeppelin tribute. Surprisingly, most (but not all) of these cover versions are stylish, new interpretations of the classic tunes and an enjoyable listen, whether you're a Zep-head or not.

4 Non Blondes perform 'Misty Mountain Hop' quite powerfully. Blind Melon give their special touch to 'Out on the Tiles'. Robert Plant himself even appears, for a duet with Tori Amos on a lengthy reworking of 'Down By the Seaside', from *Physical Graffiti*. Other contributors include Rollins Band, Helmet, Hootie and the Blowfish and Sheryl Crow, who does a laid back version of 'D'Yer Mak'er'.

An interesting, worthwhile collection that

**Live**  
is the name of the band

**throwing copper**  
is the name of the BILLBOARD No. 1 album

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