



Upper Hutt Posse

New Zealand

UPPER HUTT POSSE Can't Get Away
CD Single (Tangata)

The follow-up to the memorable 'As The Blind See' is a side of the Posse rarely seen. 'Can't Get Away' has them on the cruisy jazz/funk tip — it could be a stripped down Dignified Planets if not for the inimitable D Word vocal, and the ragga skills of Wiya. Four versions are here, the re-mix style being the best. Repeated listening is a good idea, but this track is guaranteed to please.

STICKY FILTH Def Thru Misadventure EP
7 Inch Single (Ima Hitt)

Taranaki's finest have been promising this EP for ages, and it's good to smell vinyl again (not much of the stuff finds its way to *RipItUp* any more). *Def Thru Misadventure* hurls out three heavy, break-neck speed metal beauties, kinda like a punk Motorhead. Top choice is the brilliantly titled 'Vodka, The Devil and Me', a classic in the same vein as the superb 'Weep Woman Weep'. Write to Ima Hitt, PO Box 407, New Plymouth.

NOTHING AT ALL! Busted
Cassette

Another fine cassette release from Nothing At All!. Four tracks as thrashy, muddy and snotty sounding as you'd expect. 'Clean Me Next Week' is wonderful pop/punk done Replacements style. The live favourite 'Nothing At All!' is really where it's at, and will give all third generation rude boys something to smile about.

COSA NOSTRA This Thing Of Ours
Mini Album (Antenna)

Cosa Nostra (the partnership between producer Daniel Barnes and Greg Johnson Set guitarist Trevor Reekie) serve up an eclectic range

of delicate soundscapes and genuine musical experiments on their debut release. The lack of a studied game plan sees them veering from the psychedelic techno stomp of 'Yo Scuzzball', to the trancey urban ragga/dub of 'Still Water', and onto the beautiful spacious melodies contained on 'Close To The Edge'. This impresses more with each listen and is quickly reaching the point where you fully realise its brilliance. Most important though — this must be played loud.

DAVE DOBBYN Naked Flame
CD Single (Sony)

Two of the best songs from *Twist* feature on Dobbyn's new single. 'Naked Flame' is a charming melody drenched acoustic number, featuring Emma Paki on backing vocals, while 'What Do You Really Want' straddles the line between being a powerful ballad and a balls out rocker. Both bona fide stunners.

SHIHAD Bitter
CD Single (Wildside)

Unforgiving and brutal are the two words to describe the barrage of rage that is 'Bitter'. Built on Shihad's trademark bed of dark, intense riffs, it holds just enough melody to make it not totally uneasy listening. 'Bring Your Friends' and 'Just Like Everybody Else' don't even sound like Shihad. Recorded during pre-production sessions for *Killjoy*, they're both uneventful and unchallenging.

TEMPEST Precious Times
Cassette EP

Seven song EP from Christchurch band Tempest. This music has its place, but it sure as fuck doesn't belong on my stereo. Imagine every 70s heavy metal cliché rolled into one, then triple it.

JOHN RUSSELL

singles

The return of the occasional singles column is justified by a bunch of tasty and tortured white assed rock 'n' roll. First up has to be legendary producer Butch Vig's band **Garbage** and their debut noise, *Vow* (Discordant). Trash it ain't, as vocalist Shirley Manson leads the band through intense, swirling guitars, in a tune loaded with menace and a threat to 'tear your little world apart'. Believe it, and the limited vinyl edition comes packaged in a silver tin box. Destined to be one of the year's best singles.

Next, it's beauty and the beast, as **Shane MacGowan** teams up with **Sinead O'Connor** to resurrect 'Haunted' (ZTT) from the *Sid And Nancy* soundtrack. Slicker and glossier than the original, but there's still a hint of MacGowan degeneracy in the chorus. The EP is completed by a couple of highs from *The Snake* and a suitably weather beaten version of Neil Diamond's 'Cracklin' Rosie'. Still with the ageless and **Paul Weller** comes up with a fine song in 'The Changing Man' (Go Discs), although the chorus owes too much to Sam and Dave's classic 'Soul Man'. His cover of Etta James' 'I'd Rather Go Blind' confirms he's off on another of his soul/R&B tangents, but that's good tidings, man.

To the current supposed cutting edge of British rock 'n' roll, and **Oasis** *Cigarettes and Alcohol* EP (Epic) has finally surfaced. By now you'll know the title track's crunchy, debauched swing. Add to that a passable live scrutiny at their roots in 'I Am the Walrus' and a couple of non-album tough rockers. Oasis aren't world beaters yet, but they're getting closer, as their soon to be released single 'Some Might Say' testifies. Past gods, but now mere mortals, the **Stone Roses** failed to drive home the initiative created by their quintessential indie first album. Five years down the track, songs like the wistful 'Ten Story Love

Song' (Geffen) prove they're still magical, but a lot of the stardust has worn off. In contrast, **Radiohead** have continued the momentum of 'Creep' by producing a powerful second album that gives rise to the tightly focused melodic ballad 'High and Dry' (Parlophone), and unsettling comparison piece 'Planet Telex'. The deal is rounded off by a couple of non-album tracks. 'Maquiladora' particularly impresses. The last of this month's Brits introduces Iceland's petulant, precocious and occasionally inspired **Bjork**, whose 'Army Of Me' (One Little Indian) gradually makes its mark on the back of a typically Bjork-ish cavernous, bobbing bass-line.

Stars and stripes time, and **REM** keep hitting *Monster* for singles. They're still in pay dirt with 'Crush With Eyeliner' (WEA), another cracking Stipe allusion to some sexual encounter delivered in restrained power by a band in top form. *Monster*'s best. Concluding with American power grunge pop (aka grunge), ultra-cool sleepyhead Mascis and **Dinosaur Jr.** are hard to beat, with their customary gritty, melodic bursts of static. 'I Don't Think So' (WEA) is another classic to fit that particular bill.

It's worth re-visiting Faith No More's *Digging the Grave* EP (Slash) not only because their tour here's on the horizon, but the title track and 'Ugly In The Morning' verify the band's current peak as evidenced on the something for everyone philosophy behind their new album *King For A Day... Fool For A Lifetime*. Grab.

Finally, if sleazy cowboy grunge is your poison, the **Reverend Horton Heat** might just fill your cup with 'One Time For Me' (Sub Pop), and a couple of live tracks where the frontman's stage banter has the class of the great Iggy Pop. Cheers.

GEORGE KAY



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