

new zealand



LOVES UGLY CHILDREN Personal World CD Single (Flying Nun)

The song 'Personal World' is Loves Ugly Children at their wah-wahed out, SuperChunk sounding best — a no-frills amalgam of speed, distortion, and effortless muddy melody. Very cool. Elsewhere, 'Fear and Loathing' follows the same path, only sounding more desperate, while 'Jesus Christ Satan' leads into a brief mini-epic (complete with thunderclaps and lightning strikes!) called 'Eating The Cheese'.

GARAGELAND Come Back Special CD EP (Flying Nun)

This, I really dig. No one song deserves a pedestal above the rest, but the tortured pop of 'Come Back', would probably come up trumps in a poll. The remaining four tunes are built on simple rhythm structures, with the chiming, anarchic guitar melodies pushed to the fore. Much of the character of this EP is drawn from the pained vocals of Jeremy Eade, who always manages to sound a whisker away from the edge. One to cherish.

DEAD FLOWERS Not Ready CD Single (Wildside)

Another huge sounding power-pop track from the much underrated *Sweetfish* album. Always a highlight live, 'Not Ready', is steamrolled by a mammoth grumpy guitar line that holds control

until each chorus, before losing out to an unforgettable hook that has to be heard to be believed. In addition, singer Bryan Bell puts in one of his most sterling vocal performances. Also from *Sweetfish*, comes the deceptively drowsy 'She Can't', and the two bonus tracks are the Bowie-like 'Words to Which', and the Riqi Hatfield-penned, late night croon fest, 'Sigh'.

ERMEHN Walls Of Steel CD Single (Deepgrooves)

Not what I expected first up from the man who put the 'hardcore' into the dynamic rap duo, Radio Backstab and DJ Payback. Ermehn (Backstab) half raps, half sings his way through this mid-tempo loping jam about lost love, with Khas the Field Style Orator (ex-Rough Opinion) providing the melodic moments in between. Of the four mixes, the choice cut is the 'SOS' version, where the pace is picked up, and the verses are rapped in Samoan.

BLUNT Grip Cassette (Yellow Bike)

This eight song tape was recorded on a four-track in December 94, at Quadrophonia in Christchurch. So appalling, at times, is the sound quality, it's like someone farting into a walkie talkie. But mostly Blunt are playing at full throttle and come through loud, if not clear. They alternate between cacophonies of jumbled rhythms, distorted basslines and random vocals, to flat-

out, heads down punk tunes, like... 'Punk Thing'. Be warned, Blunt are an acquired taste. *Grip* is one for fans or the obsessively curious. Available from PO Box 586, Palmerston North.

JORDAN REYNE Wilt/Long Way To Climb CD Single (Deepgrooves)

Deepgrooves' latest signing, Jordan Reyne hitch-hiked from Porirua to Auckland to record this single. She comes over like Shona Laing's kid sister on the airy, tension filled 'Wilt', and reinforces that on the languid, acoustic balled 'Long Way'.

BREATHE Things Like These CD EP

Breathe are graduates of the Throw/Cinematic school of rock. They're on the vocal-driven pop tip, promoting well structured, mild melodic pop. Much to their credit, they stray close to, but never quite reach ballad territory. The multi-layered brilliance of 'Dive Tower' is the hit pick, and although it wasn't the New Edition cover I was hoping for, 'Candy Girl' is not far behind. Available from 101 Victoria Street, Wellington.

THE PET ROCKS Country Road No. 7 Cassette Demo

The title track has had a great deal of airplay on radio b, and those who saw Pet-Rocks support the Cruel Sea recently claim they are the band to watch. 'Country Road' is a desperado's rock epic. The vocals remind one of Robert Plant, wearing his tightest pair of nads-crushing slacks, while the shrill guitar lines distort almost to the point where they lose the pop reigns — but not quite. 'Hair Trigger's' charm is that it's a pathetically simple idea for a pop song, and an almost indiscernible country feel is as close to describing the X factor that makes this appealing.

PREMATURE AUTOPSY Decriminalise Cassette (Pentagram Scullers)

Premature Autopsy impress as much on tape as they do live. Hard, fast, dense, moody and heavy, *Decriminalise* shows Premature Autopsy up as technically superb musicians, who've paired themselves with a vocalist who owns a phenomenally powerful death metal howl. Without pretending to be any kind of expert on this genre, if you're planning to explore this particular sound, it should be done in the company of PA. Available from 9 Volga Street, Island Bay, Wellington.

DELUGE Serenade for Civilization Cassette EP (Limousine)

Deluge have grunted to burn. *Serenade for Civilization* is tight as a flea's ass. Brutal death metal, done with an overall feel of positivity, and you have to admire a set of vocal chords that can withstand the abuse evident here. Top track is the break-neck speed thrash of 'Killing the Universe'. Available from PO Box 96048, Balmoral, Auckland.

HUMAN Not So Famous Game Show Themes Cassette Demo

At times speed metal with death metal vocals, and often Napalm Death on speed, Human are, if nothing else, supremely gifted in the song title department — 'Dance of The Amputees' and 'I Ate Him in Self Defence' are definitely the work of a genius. Write to PO Box 36 249, Christchurch.

PSYCLOPS Defaced Cassette EP

Like Nelson's favourite sons Daemon, Psyclops offer a breathtakingly tight brand of speed metal-cum-hardcore. But, unlike Daemon, they let themselves down on the vocal front. The sheer power of the twin rhythm gats overwhelms the voice of Jere Cole, making Psyclops not quite all they could be. Write to 6 Moore Street, Cambridge.

CRANKING DREAM Love Blister Cassette Demo

A cool title — one to conjure with — and not bad contents either, if a little on the earnest side. 'Love Blister' displays a competent line in dense guitar riffarama, when its not straying into butt-clenching seriousness. 'Futile' proves Cranking Dream can craft a classy, edgy rock/pop tune, but again the lyrics and vocal delivery get caught in a web of pretension. Write to 22 Diana Drive, Glenfield, Auckland.

PAUA FRITTERS Harbour Cassingle (Sun Pacific)

'Harbour' is pretty cool, a nice simple ballad, accompanied by a weeping violin melody that I'm a sure-fire sucker for. The mood is spoiled though, by 'Hit and Run', a 'giddyup' style number that needs a bullet between the eyes. 'Is This the Life?' goes some way towards redemption, being a vaguely reggae flavoured pop song.

JOHN RUSSELL

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