

with bad breath. Although a tougher meaner cookie than *Dookie*, all the stuff you loved or hated from that album is still present.

Perhaps the biggest bonus for Green Day is that with their second big album, there's no need to make fatuous comparisons with 80s new wave punk bands, 'cause now Green Day just sound like Green Day (obviously), and that's a pretty good band to sound like.

KEVIN LIST

PAUL KELLY

Deeper Water
(White)

Deeper Water is another case of (some) great songs, tepid production, OK band. The title track, one of Kelly's finest works, is spoilt by a leaden, predictable rock production. Better is the REM-sounding 'Blush', which (along with 'I'll Forgive but I Won't Forget'), opens the album with a bracing injection of sexuality. 'California' reminds one of Neil Young's 'Albuquerque', and continues Kelly's fascination with America.

All in all, a rather unsatisfactory album, which has one longing for the return of a band as sharp and colourful as The Messengers. The lightweight pap of 'Extra Mile' and 'Madeleine's Song' (which sounds like cut-rate Mink de Ville) suggest even a writer as fine as Kelly isn't past chucking in a few fillers. Last year Kelly said: 'I know I'll probably fall short and end up writing Paul Kelly songs. When you are young you can be anyone, but as you become older you become someone.' *Deeper Water* suggests Kelly's art hasn't always survived the transformation.

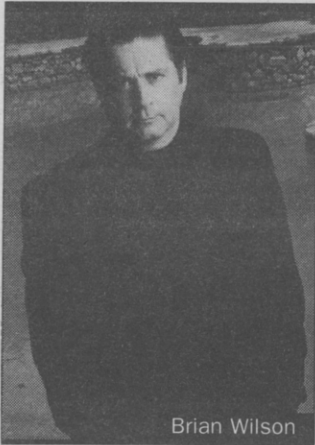
GREG FLEMING

kd LANG

All You Can Eat
(Warners)

kd lang's star took a long time to rise, but when its time came, *Ingenue* ensured it was meteoric. Her next act was the soundtrack to *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*. The last time we saw her on the telly, she was riding a chopper and sporting the look of the cat who stole the cream, which she practically was (Uma Thurman was on the back of that chopper!).

kd's new album boasts the benefits of its two most recent predecessors (the clear and effortlessly



Brian Wilson

climbing vocals of Ingenue, and a hint of the funk that came to the fore on *Cowgirls*, but it's an entirely different animal altogether. One might be tempted to call it a cheeky monkey, were it not so brazen in its delicious advances. 'How bad could it be if you amuse yourself with me?', kd asks, on 'Sexuality', and you can virtually feel the world swooning in non-gender specific unison. My only complaint is *All You Can Eat* is never enough (at 36.20), but I never could get enough of a good thing.

BRONWYN TRUDGEON

BRIAN WILSON

I Just Wasn't Made
For These Times
(MCA)

There were probably many of us emerging from the Brian Wilson documentary at this year's *Film Festival* who hoped the soundtrack songs would soon find release on an album. Well we've got our wish, but it's a mixed blessing, because without the tender pathos of those movie images — it's good to see him (almost) well again — the shakiness in Brian's voice is starkly evident.

The luminous beauty of these old songs may be enhanced by modern recording techniques (and Don Was' production), but Brian's vocals are a poor substitute for his sublime performances of yesterday.

'Caroline No' probably works best because the fragility of Brian's delivery most matches the song. Otherwise, a couple of his 1980s 'collaborations' with ex-therapist Eugene Landy sound pretty good,

but then, Brian was even further out to lunch during the original recordings. Daughters Wendy and Carnie also join him in what sounds like an act of reconciliation on 'Do It Again'.

Some of the tracks are mere fragments, and one is a bizarre home demo taped during the lost years of the 80s. Total playing time: 29.29.

PETER THOMSON

LEE PERRY/ MAD PROFESSOR

Super Ape Inna Jungle
(Ariwa/Chant)

Lee Perry and the mad Professor discover the switch that speeds the snare drum up and takes them into... jungle (described by one cynic as the black version of techno!) The jungle mixes are done by Douggie Digital and Juggler, while the dub mixes are handled by the Mad Professor. And Perry, the mad old codger, has managed to join the latest craze with some style. Not surprising, really, because Perry has a fascination with jungle noises going back a couple of decades.

The sound is stripped back — bass bigger than a Mount Ruapehu explosion, and insistent nagging snare drum guaranteed to send a schizophrenic into a fit. Turn it up loud and let the trance take over.

MARK REVINGTON

MIKE SCOTT

Bring 'Em All In
(Chrysalis)

The continuing saga of Mike Scott's search for his personal Celtic, religious roots takes us to his first solo album. This is the fourth leg in his search, a pilgrimage that began in the early 80s with the big music of the Waterboys which evolved into the Dublin folkie phase, before ending in the New York rock edge of 1993's *Dream Harder*. Inspired by the spiritual Findhorn Community in North-East Scotland, and recorded there with the help of Niko Bolas, Neil Young's producer, *Bring 'Em All In* is the bard stripped bare. Armed only with piano and guitars, and abandoning his love of metaphors for some straight talking, Scott, ironically, has exposed the weakness of his songs.

Spiritual gusto can't hide the

fact the title track is an ordinary song, and electric undercurrents aren't enough to save 'Edinburgh Castle' or 'I Know She's in the Building' while 'City Full of Ghosts' merely hauls him back to a Dylanish honky tonk rant. The only unqualified success is the beautiful, vulnerable 'Wonderful Disguise', although 'What Do You Want Me To Do?' is a moving admission of vanity and need. So, Scott's journey of self discovery has taken a step forward, it's just a shame his music has taken a step back.

GEORGE KAY

GREG MALCOLM

Trust Only This Face
(Braille, thru IMD)

A curious release by wizzo experimental guitarist Greg Malcolm. It's 28 tracks of nutty commentaries, songs, and pasted together sample and noise soundscapes — a New Zealand synthesis of Negativland/Kramer and John S Hall's duo work, with a generous measure of crazy kiwiana humour? Yep!

With the help of many guests, among them Derek Champion (Bilders) and Paul Sutherland (Into the Void), Greg Malcolm has produced a quirky, often witty, yet often thought provoking collection in *Trust Only This Face*. While its experimentalism may detract, its entertainment value cannot be underestimated. Comes with an excellent booklet full of lyrics and liner notes too.

SHAUN JURY

AC/DC

Ballbreaker
(EastWest)

The moral to this record being: You just can't keep a good riff down. Barely seconds into this album, during the intro to 'Hard as a Rock', you can definitively say: 'Yes, this is another AC/DC record.' Once again, all the essential elements are here. The Young brothers set up a sweaty boogie chug, which seems all the more believable with Phil Rudd back on the drum stool, keeping it anchored as solidly as possible.

The thematic scope of *Ballbreaker* is pretty standard AC/DC — songs like the title track, 'Cover You in Oil' and 'Whiskey on the Rocks' are pretty much self-

explanatory, while the lyrics are so bad it's almost painful. (From 'Honey Roll': 'Baby, bend over, touch your toes...' I don't think I need to explain why Bikini Kill won't be covering that.)

After such a lengthy absence from the world of rawk, and such a bad run on the last few albums, *Ballbreaker* may seem better than it really is to those of us wanting a return to form of AC/DC, but it really does seem like the goods are being delivered here.

KIRK GEE

SUPERCHUNK

Here's Where The
Strings Come In
(Merge/Fellaheen)

SuperChunk's blistering live shows at the Powerstation late last year solidified every opinion you'd ever had of them after listening to their records. The Chapel Hill foursome crunched, popped, punked, and squealed, till you put them on the pedestal they so rightly deserved. *Here's Where The Strings Come In*, their fourth album (plus two comp's), continues the object lesson in 90s punk rock, while remaining as always, far from the corporate chasers.

In the beginning, SuperChunk squeezed 'the band accelerator' in the same way you would a water pistol, until *Foolish*, last year's curve ball album, saw them stray in a slower, moodier direction. *Here's Where...* is *Foolish* part two. 'Detroit Has a Skyline', 'Certain Stars' and the first single, 'Hyper Enough', quell the addiction for speed, while 'Silverleaf and Snowy Tears' joins with 'Sunshine State' as arguably the nearest



Superchunk

SuperChunk will come to producing ballads.

Here's Where... boasts no great leaps forward. You still have to listen intently to hear the genius of the melodies buried 'neath a wash of fuzz, but as far as punk in the 90s goes, nobody does it better.

JOHN RUSSELL

VARIOUS

The Fridge:

A Compilation of Hamilton Music
(Fridge Records)

The Fridge, besides being an essential household commodity, is the name of the in-house studio of Hamilton's Contact 89FM. And it's here, invariably with Contact's production manager, Gordon Bassett, manning the mixing desk, that all of *The Fridge* the album's 21 tracks were recorded. There's no unifying theme tying the album together, although plenty of the same personnel pop up in the various bands represented. From the curiously 80s sound of 5 Girls, to the roots reggae of Boil Up, to the wiggly punk-pop of Wendyhouse, there are styles aplenty.

As with many such compilations, song and performance quality go up and down like a whore's drawers, the highlight here being Tugboat (aka Jon-Boy Armstrong), with the brooding JPSE-inflected 'Old Timer'. Unfortunately, by the time Mobile Stud Unit and the Big Muffin Serious Band trot out their wares in the album's 'live to air' section, proceedings have degenerated into farce, with no redeeming qualities. If it's a joke, I guess you had to be there, although I'm glad I wasn't. However, there's a sting in *The Fridge*'s tail in the form of the five track Dribbly Cat Attraction EP that closes it. A most pleasing cacophony indeed — a pity then that, on balance, *The Fridge* contains too many mouldy leftovers and not enough in the way of tasty morsels such as these. Mmmmm, cold chicken.

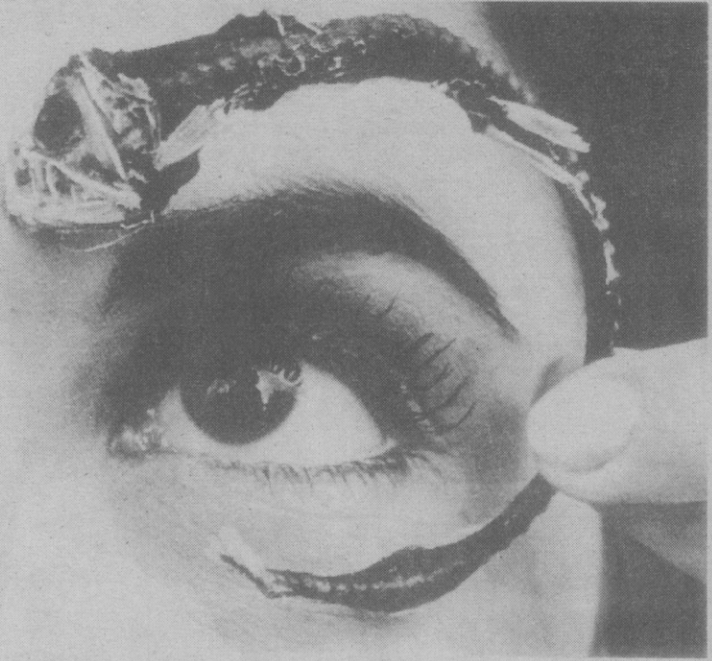
MARTIN BELL

TACKHEAD

Tackhead, Power Inc.,
Volumes One and Two
(Blanc Records)

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