

ARTS

Thompson Bangs Bea = Mojo

Mojo's *Otis* is Gonzo

by Hugh Hardy

Mojo Nixon
Otis
Enigma Records



I just wanna tell the millions of you out there staked out under your beds waitin' for the final cataclysm, ('cause when you scooped up the new Mojo opus you probably gawked at it in horror, dropped it like a hot potato, screaming "GAWD NO! THE COSMIC BALANCE HAS BEEN UPSET!! MOJO AND SKID ARE NO MORE!?! THE UNIVERSE IS DOOMED!!!") that it's safe to come out. I too, was tempted to crawl into a bottle of Tequila, never again to emerge, instead I closed my eyes, took a few theraputic breaths, and timidly dropped the *Otis* tape into my deck.

Ol' Skid's whereabouts may be unknown, he may have been reduced to a mere footnote in the liners, but he's definitely here in spirit. Mojo has bravely forged on alone, the spearhead of contemporary gonzo culture, poking holes in windbags on every level. Be they sleazy or be they pretentious, they all receive the proverbial sharp stick in the eye.

I say "gonzo" culture because

Mojo appears to have inherited his Paul Bunyan "speak-reel-loud-and-carry-an-axe" mantle from the likes of Hunter S. Thompson and the late Lester Bangs, the pioneers of gonzo journalism. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing* worlds, be it *in Las Vegas* or on the *Campaign Trail '72*, were chocked full of beer, acid, Caddys, Vincent Black Shadow motorcycles, Acapulco shirts, hitch-hikers, guns and indescribable political corruption.

Bangs was an emotionally wracked individual who felt utterly alienated from the society he watched steadily deteriorate. A compilation of his writing, *Psychotic reactions and Carburetor Dung*, is simply one of the greatest books I've ever read, not only for its astute observations on music, but also its harrowing personal introspection of a man who simply knew that something was (and is) seriously wrong with society and felt hopelessly unable to make a difference (ironically, he did),

Bangs like Thompson, had an eye for the unusual. His jones was for screeching feedback, recreational cough syrup, B-side, oral sex, Astral weeks, and utter disdain of any type of pretension.

Now where does this all fit in, you may ask? Well, take sperm samples from both Thompson and Bangs, inseminate Aunt Bea from the Andy Griffith Show, and out pops Mojo Nixon screamin' GREAT GOOGLY MOOGLY and tellin' all the Depeche Mode fans to head for the hills.

Mojo's music is oceans away from being serious, but that doesn't mean that it shouldn't be evaluated on the same level as some shit-sucking piece of U2

bombast, as many "serious" critics think. Like Mojo says in "Don Henley Must Die" (heh heh!): "Be wild, young, free and dumb — Get yer head outta yer tail!" What Mojo is saying is that it takes intelligence to act dumb but remember to retain an air of cleverness and innovation when doing it (scratch, scratch-huh?). This is the heart of gonzo: throwing your opponent off by appearing slobbish, and then getting them where it really counts in the intellectual arena. Self-respect, for all you skeptics, is something you can't buy.

As for the album, *Otis*, I wouldn't say it's Mojo's best effort to date. But its got miles on all the "serious" shit out there.

Witty fun with a Nasty Girl

by Brent Poland

The Nasty Girl
directed by Michael Verhoeven
produced by Santana Film
Productions

At last there is a movie based on a the book by that famous Canadian author Stephen Leacock. Well, okay, the script is German, and so is the director, but the general idea is there. If you are an English major and have seen the new film by German director Michael Verhoeven, hopefully you will know what I am talking about.

A comedy in the absurd, *The Nasty Girl* is a light-hearted look at a touchy subject. Set in the '60s and '70s, the film is based on the true story of a young, naive German girl (Lena Stolze) who grows from being the darling of her community to an object of hatred and terrorism over the controver-

sial subject of Jewish internment in World War II.

Spiced with good-natured humour about life in a small German town, the plot soon changes to reveal an undercurrent of lies and deceit that are churned up when someone asks the wrong questions. Stolze plays a young girl writing an essay for a national contest. Blissfully ignorant of history, she decides to write her essay on how her local church resisted the Nazis.

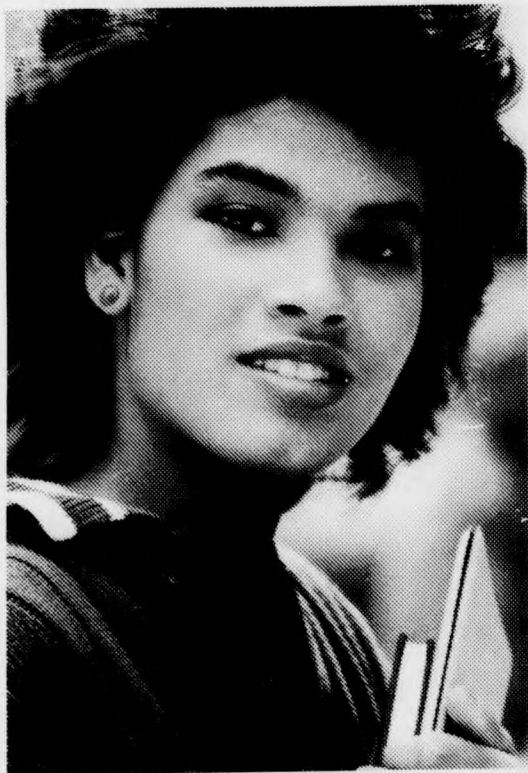
When her seemingly innocent questions on the treatment of the Jewish population during the Nazi "occupation" receive the cold shoulder from village elders, the intellectual mind of the young girl is pricked. Verhoeven's film shows her advancement from innocence, to conciousness to revulsion, which leads her to believe that not much has changed.

The Nasty Girl has a decidedly European flavour (maybe it was the English subtitles!!); it seems to favour intellectualism over the Rambo-Robocop style that so many North American films have. I liked the film, but that maybe due to the fact that my brain was not accustomed to the unusual choice of backgrounds and camera shots that Verhoeven used to add variety.

Verhoeven has a refreshingly different approach to the sticky question of racism. Racism is the root of the issue, but not the main concern. The main question is the community's ability to clam up and turn upon the little girl, who used to be its pride.

The Nasty Girl is not a smut filled, action packed film, despite the title. It is a witty, fun and intellectual film with just a pinch of nastiness.

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