

**Lydia Lunch  
Queen of Siam  
(Ze/Quality)**

This year's Judy Garland, the not-so-innocent Lydia Lunch. Ms. Lunch, who was to open for The Stranglers last week before her band broke up, displays some fascinating concepts on her debut album. Lunch looks anywhere from 16 to 28, but she sounds like a fourteen-year-old. There are many musical styles present from the straight-ahead rhythmic "Atomic Bongos", to the ballad "Spooky", to some off-beat, slow motion shuffles on the free-form "Tied and Twist". Almost comically, Lunch offers a jazzy big sound on "Lady Scarface", and some old television detective theme music that she has labelled "A Cruise To The Moon". The best song, though, is "Carnival Fat Man", a wobbly, laughing piano, guitar and tuba exercise that has Lunch trying to decide which of two fat men is legit. Worth possessing, though depressing.

**Patrick Godfrey  
Ancient Ships  
(Apparition)**

You would almost guess that this album is actually an ECM recording. Except for the cover art, *Ancient Ships* seems a lot like the kind of record we have come to associate with the German label. Patrick Godfrey is actually a Toronto pianist, and the record is on a small independent, Apparition Records.

Godfrey has had a varied background, supporting musicians like Bruce Cockburn and Murray McLachlan, composing and performing soundtracks for the CBC and NFB and finally, playing in a free form improvisational trio.

On this, his first solo recording, Godfrey has created a fine fusion of classical and improvisational forms. The instrumentation that Godfrey uses, such as an antique harmonium and a harpsichord, give the album a definite classical mood. Most of the compositions begin with a simple theme played



**Records...**

**Spooky tongues**

on one instrument. Godfrey then expands on top of the theme by overdubbing improvisations on other instruments. Three of the pieces are solo piano pieces, the most memorable being the Satie-like "All Along".

Although *Ancient Ships* does not break any new musical ground it is still a satisfying and enjoyable effort, even if it wasn't recorded in the Talent Studio by Manfred and Jan-Erik.

**Hacker & Goldstein, Inc.**

**The Shirts  
Inner Sleeve  
(Capitol/EMI)**

*Inner Sleeve*, The Shirts' second album, has a rocky but promising start, and then goes pretty well straight downhill. The first few tunes are catchy and appealing, and if you don't listen too closely, you might even think they're quite good. "I Can't Get It Through My Head" is one of the few cuts that sufficiently showcases lead singer Annie Golden's beautiful, acrobatic voice (reminiscent at times of early Debbie Harry), which is the only thing The Shirts have going for them.

The problems are many. The Shirts take no chances, push no limits, and the result is noncommittal, unconvincing music. The guitar work is bland to sickening, the lyrics generally stupid, and Golden should be wrapping her tongue around better material. Without her, the band sounds like a myriad of other mediocre bands.

The keyboards are often interesting, though, especially in the only Golden-penned number, "As Long As the Laughter Lasts," a near gem. But after that, *Inner Sleeve* tumbles into a sort of Nowhere Land with only occasional flashes of Golden's misplaced talent.

**Stuart Ross**



**Moon Martin  
Street Fever  
(Capitol)**

Moon Martin is the Burt Bacharach of his generation. He's 30 years old, has two big hits he's written for others, "Cadillac Walk" for Mink de Ville and "Bad Case Of Loving You" for Robert Palmer, as well as his own hit, "Rolene". On this, his third album, he seems content to just lay back. There are no exceptional tunes, just good consistent playing. On the back of the album *Moon* appears to be sleeping standing up. Does that mean anything? Martin always mixes a couple of ballads with some rockers and so we have "Love Gone Bad", in the thin wispy mold of "Rolene", and "Five Days of Fever", the gutsy

rock number. Perhaps his strongest effort yet.

**Elliott Lefko**

**Doctrine of Flux  
Announce Your Achievements  
(Nul Class)**

Every once in a while, something new happens in music. The few people lucky enough to find *Doctrine of Flux's* new album *Announce Your Achievements* (Nul Class Records) are listening to it happen now.

The band is something of a mystery. But it's clear from even the first few cuts that they're on to something important.

The music is, to be honest, less than entirely comprehensible. What at first seems to be non-harmonic chanting reveals itself, to the hardworking ear, to be a

tersely melodic acapella track, "Circus Practice".

Another tune, which seems to reflect Eno-Byrne influences, haunts us with the message that "There's too much salt."

If all this sounds rather cryptic, it's probably the most accessible stuff on the album, which almost seems designed to turn away listeners. Nevertheless, *Announce Your Achievements* offers rewards for the patient ear - one of them being that you're probably on to one of the most important bands ever.

**Jon Mann**

**XTC  
Black Sea  
(Virgin/Polygram)**

Following up last year's masterpiece, *Drums and Wires*, must have been a frightening task for XTC. The album didn't contain one cut that wasn't Great. *Black Sea* is a brave attempt, but doesn't quite equal its predecessor.

"Respectable Street", "Generals and Majors" and "Living Through Another Cuba" are all very fine compositions, filled with the unique, intelligent verbal wit we have come to expect from the band. And aside from these obviously likeable tunes are "Burning With Optimism's Flames", in which the boys take on Richard Rodgers; "Sgt. Rock (Is Going To Help Me)", a lyrically and musically hilarious plea, with definite vaudeville flavourings; the enigmatic "Travels in Nihilon", sounding like a flock of approaching cannibals; the desperate "Paper and Iron (note and coins)"; and the litter's ribbon-winner, the spectacular "No Language in Our Lungs", utilizing their great phrasing and vocal contortions on "There is no language in our lungs/There is no muscle in our tongues/To tell the world what's in our hearts."

Unfortunately, the album also contains three quite forgettable songs, the less said about them, the better. But you can easily pour jam on them, and let your stylus skid across to the good stuff.

**Stuart Ross**

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