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# Tracks

by Andrew M. Duke

Karyn White's self-titled Warner Bros. debut, produced mainly by hitmakers L.A. and Babyface, is certainly worth the time of any fan of quality funk. The lyrics are intelligently-written and put to very hot grooves. But the first thing you'll notice is White's voice; rich with smoky soul and full of so much feeling that one wants to melt. The LP is full of excellent material but "Superwoman", her current hit "The Way You Love Me" and her latest, "Secret Rendezvous" are the most notable.

1987 saw the release of *Paid In Full* from Eric B. & Rakim and the title track (remixed by Coldcut), "I Know You Got Soul" (from which M/A/R/R/S stole the line "pump up the volume") and "Move the Crowd" had everyone from the believing b-boys to the coolest college kids (who'd never admit to actually liking a hip hop tune) filling the dance floors. Eric B. & Rakim are back with their follow-up, *Follow the Leader* (UNI/MCA), and again are taking the scene by storm. The album is a literal journey into sound with the uncompromising

knuckle-flexing of DJ Eric B. paired with Rakim's rhymes. This MC doesn't spout clichés, he's setting the standard to which the rest will be compared. Check out the title track, "Microphone Fiend", "Lyrics Of Fury", "The R" and any other track on the LP.

*Power* (Sire/WEA) is the second album from Ice-T, the man best known for contributing the hard-hitting title track to the soundtrack for the movie "Colors". Ice-T is an ex-convict and this comes through in his lyrical stance and overall image. This is hardcore hip hop with all the heavy rhythms, unforgiving scratches, and sampled noise thrown down over the backbone of a bassline. Titles like "I'm Your Pusher", "High Rollers" and "Grand Larceny" — all fine tracks in their own right — deal with past experiences Ice-T went through during his gang-warfare days. I only hope kids can see through his occasional sexist bullshit and general glamourization of the underground and see him saying that this is what they *shouldn't* be doing. Is this really how reverse psychology is supposed to work?

Formed in 1977 in Washington, D.C. (and eventually black-listed from ever playing there again), Bad Brains quickly established themselves in the growing hardcore scene of that time

through their politically and spiritually conscious thinking and their habit of playing an original reggae tune in the midst of each hardcore set they did. Inspired initially by the energy of the Sex Pistols and later on by the Rastafarian religion, the Brains began their career playing minute and half long songs such as "Pay to Cum" where the speed creates such a blur that "a peace together/a piece apart/a piece of wisdom/from our hearts" are the only audible lyrics. *Bad Brains Live* (SST) documents their evolution from these early lightning-quick thrashes to the more thought-out sound they were experimenting with on their 1987 "Return To Heaven" tour.

Songwriter/guitarist Moe Berg and his band The Pursuit of Happiness, after shopping around for a record deal for too many years, have finally been snapped up by Chrysalis Records in the States. The album is called *Love Junk* and features re-recorded versions of "I'm An Adult Now", "Killed By Love" and "Ten Fingers" along with ten other tracks. Producer Todd Rundgren has cleaned up their sound a bit without destroying the raw, intense groove they've managed to create. My roommate's first impression was "Geez, this album really rocks" and I have to agree with him.

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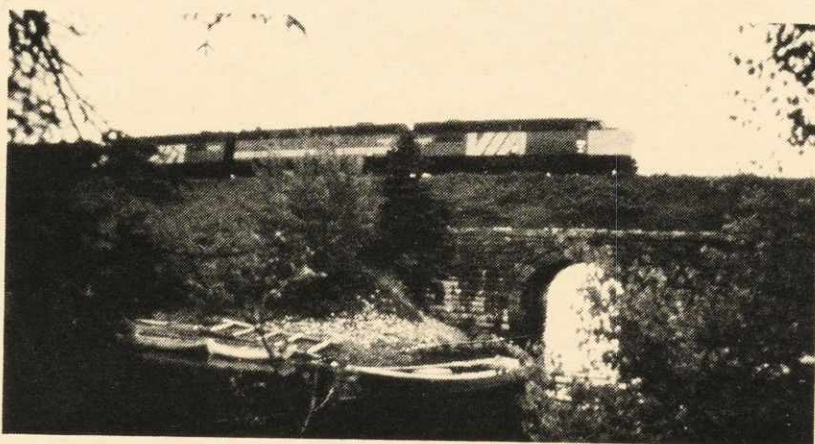
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