The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion have

taken a lot of criticism over the years

about whether or not they actually do

play authentic blues. How do they deal

with such allegations? They release an

album with blues legend R.L. Burnside

to show their credibility - impressive

stuff. But then they release their fifth

album, Now I Got Worry, and it turns

out to be their sloppiest, messiest record

to date. At times it seems that a punk

influence is almost as important as the

blues, but that is due to the rawness of

the music - the distorted guitars and

the almost-decipherable vocals make it

hard to equate this music with the likes

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KENNY FITZPATRICK

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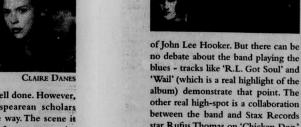
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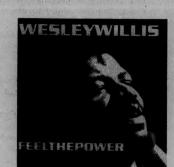
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'Wail' (which is a real highlight of the album) demonstrate that point. The other real high-spot is a collaboration between the band and Stax Records star Rufus Thomas on 'Chicken Dog.' Wonderful stuff. Hell, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion are so cool, they cover Dub Narcotic Sound System's 'Fuck Shit Up' and that fact alone speaks volumes - what else do you need to Sigh. I just don't get Wesley Willis

being schizophrenic, and how the music he creates acts as therapy and keeps him sane - music can be a wonderful thing. But as far as I can tell, it would be better if the music was kept as a private therapy session because it really point, and maybe that's why he has such a cult following, but after working my way through Feel The Power (his sixteenth or so album), the joke had worn a little thin. Every single song is basically the same - the same rhythm from his Technics keyboard (Country Rhythm #8), the same song structure and the same irritating two minute sythnesizer solo in the middle of each song. Sigh. I just don't seem to get it. And did I mention that he couldn't carry a tune in a bucket either? Sigh.



Or that they even got the Dust Brothers, fresh from their work with Beck, in to produce this too? Sigh. Maybe it isn't quite that bad since the lyrics offer an insight into the mind of the bus-obsessed Willis, who spends his time trying to go on "joy rides" rather than "torture hell rides" and also going to see the wealth of bands that he ends up writing about (sample song-titles:

'Alice In Chains,' 'Ice Cube,' 'Lonely Kings'). The background to who Willis is makes this one of the more interesting recordings I've heard in a long time but I challenge anyone to make it through more than three songs in one

idea that all the best songs that Robyn Hitchcock ever wrote appeared on the four albums that he released for them between 1987 and 1993 is a little silly. But that didn't stop them from putting out a so-called Greatest Hits album that covers a very small part of his illustrious career. In their defense (for releasing it, not for naming it what they did), those four A&M albums were more than a little on the patchy side, so this actually turns out to be the best way to experience that period. In this condensed form, Hitchcock's true eccentricity shines through; the more normal moments like 'So You Think You're In Love' sit almost of 'One Long Pair Of Eyes.' There are plenty of commercial moments though, and a couple of covers, too, for good measure. All in all, not a bad collection but definitely not his greatest hits.

Curiously enough, Mr. Hitchcock different label - he's on Warner now) called Moss Elixir, and it shows that he can function quite adequately without his Egyptians. And like those A&M albums, it has some really good songs and also those that are merely okay. It isn't a big departure from his earlier work, but nobody really wants him to change (except to



The Soft Boys...) and so the status quo continues. And if you want to see just how bizarre he can be, check out the short story in the CD

Staying with all things eccentric, John Cale has just released his first brand-new album of quite some time Walking On Locusts is one of the more accessible things that the ex-Velvet Underground founder has released, and it could even be described as a pop album by someone feeling a little on the lazy side. It may be pop in the sense that it is easy to get into, but there is still something more depth. Not only does it have some genuinely weird moments ('Crazy Egypt' demonstrates what happens when two eccentrics like John Cale and David Byrne work together), it also has some moving, ballady songs (including 'Some Friends' which is Cale's final elegy to Sterling Morrison). Moe Tucker turns up on drums, completing the VU connection (funnily enough, Lou Reed is nowhere to be seen ...), making Walking On Locusts a strange mix of the old and the new - the focus is most definitely on the new. It is probably best summed up by the title of one track - 'Indistinct Notion Of Cool'. How apt. A very classy album.

CD Reviews



ginger has re-emerged from a cloak of obscurity to present the public with suddenly I came to my senses. While ginger may have come to their senses as a band, it isn't showing in their work, quite

ginger undoubtedly recorded their best songs during their successful stint as The Grapes of Wrath, but now they're a different band with a slightly different sound. The suddenly album sways more towards a percussion-driven atmosphere, but with a soft feel. In terms of evolution, the band has added a great amount of texture to each track, intricately interweaving each instrument into the mix. And Tom Hooper has certainly

learned how to fit his voice into each song, especially the tune, "What I The main problem is lack of radio singles: suddenly serves up nothing

spectacular, while the remixed version of their past hit "Solid Ground" doesn't sound any better or worse than Far Out's original mix. As an album the songs work well together, but ultimately serve as little more than background music for semi-relaxed late night study sessions.

• PETER J. CULLEN

Dalbello (Lisa, for those of you who were wondering if this was a band or a person) keeps popping up in the Canadian music scene. The first instance occurred in the late 1970s, and resulted in a Juno award for most promising female vocalist. Then, about ten years later, she reappeared and scored a radio hit with her song "Tango." History lesson aside, Dalbello appears as if she is planning on sticking around for a while, as her new album Whore is certainly a winner. The ten tracks on this album are a mix between 1990s radio-friendly



rock ("Heavy Boots," "Easy") and progressive, yet nonetheless catchy rock ("Eleven," "The Revenge of Sleeping Beauty"). To top it off, Dalbello has an excellent voice, and surrounds herself with accomplished musicians who do justice to her finely crafted songs. A surprisingly good album.

Car Button Cloth

The Lemonheads are consistent. Their past two albums (Come On Feel The Lemonheads, It's a Shame About Ray) are, in fact, both the same. This album can be considered volume three. That is not a bad thing, however, since it's exactly what people want from a Lemonheads album. It would be interesting for the band to perform something more like their early hardcore material (Lick), and it would be great to have the band be something other then Evan Dando, but that's okay because the new album should be a success.

Car Button Cloth kicks off with "It's All True," which is a great song that is quite catchy. The best song is, however, "The Outdoor Type," which tells a great story about lying to his love interest to fit the bill. This song is by far the best since their early days. Advice: buy this album

Dr. Harry A. Bohnsack



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