



SHIVER

MEAT

SKRATCHSKRATCHSK

TALK ABOUT UGLY!
JEEZ... WHAT A RACKET
I WAS ABOUT TO TAKE
THE THING OFF WHEN...



ATCHSKRATCHSKRAT

TANGERINE DREAM OPTICAL RACE (PRIVATE MUSIC)

"Und zo ve see der sea-otter svim down into der burrow vere he engages in a life or death struggle viv his deadly enemy, zer sea-slug".

"click"
"And here comes McMahon! 40, 30, 20 yards and still going! Touch-down!
"click"

Yes. Be it those lovely PBS specials where all the family are sitting down preparing to be severely embarrassed by wildlife engaged in strained copulation, or the sports retrospectives where the commentators work themselves up into a frenzy over the endeavours of yet another sweaty oaf, **Tangerine Dream** are probably providing the sound-track.

Ah yes, the Tangles. Back in the days when I was a Terminally acne-ridden antisocial little git and I spent most of the time moping over Penn Warren and Faulkner, such stuff together with the likes of Messrs. Oldfield and Eno was part of my staple diet. Why I can still quote huge chunks of Kesey's "sometimes a Great Notion" (The best novel ever written) to the strains of "Incantations." I'm sure a similar thing happens to you, eh readers?

Nowadays it is only **Edgar Froese** that remains in the original line up with **Baumann**, **Franke** and **Schmoelling** being replaced by one **Paul Haslinger**, the rest leaving the fold to follow singularly unsuccessful careers on their own. Quite often the consequence of **Froese** being left alone is rather unsavoury because it means that he can get his bloody awful fuzzy guitar out and ruin perfectly acceptable instrumentals with frightening efficacy.

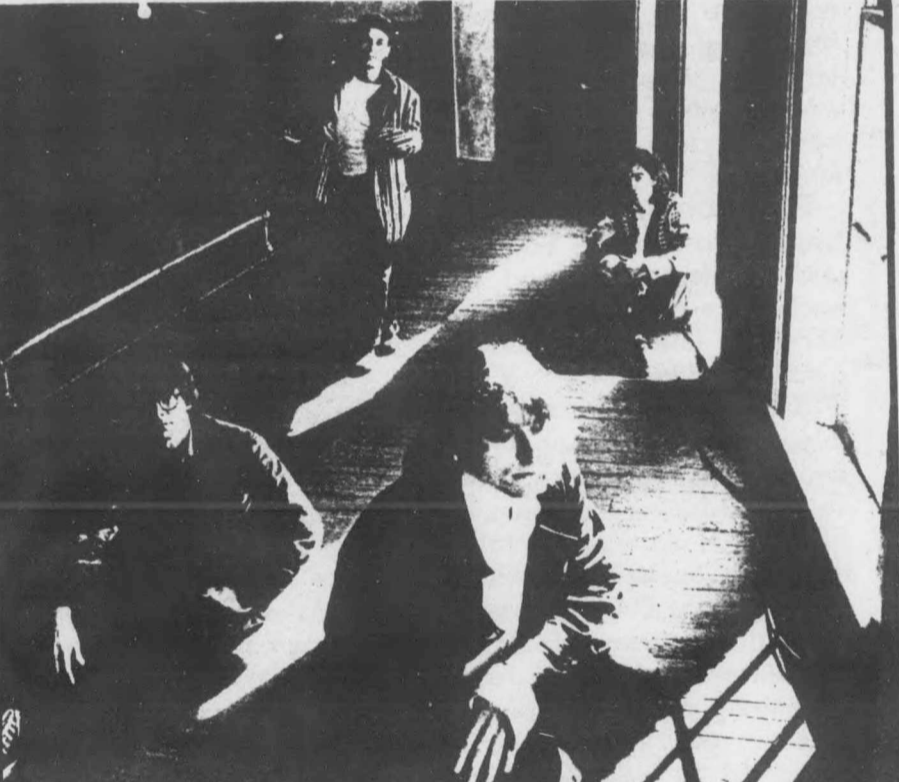
We need not worry though because I'll put my modulator on the line here and say that "Optical Race" is one of the best works to come out of the TD fold since their original inception in the early seventies. Given, there aren't a lot of incoherent aural structures and twiddly sound effects (fodder for astral projection) but here we have a collection of wonderful panoramic vistas of sound that fill your trouser pockets with a feeling of warmth and gentle reflection (ooer!...sounds a bit naughty -Ed). **Edgar's** not a thickie and he knows that the New Age gang (the coffee table genera-

tion) just gobble this sort of stuff up. Indeed, it's a pretty fair prediction that soon this will be thrust into CD players from Manhattan to the Valley.

It's a little dangerous to be caught off guard at certain moments though. During "Atlas Eyes" and "Mothers of Rain" my roommates were startled to discover me melting into the living room sofa. Only on mentioning that they had set fire to my slippers was I brought out of my stupour.

I have no misgivings about recommending this album. Doubtless it will be slammed into every blunt object available in the contemporary music press but I'll just say this. If you do enjoy sitting quietly for a few moments in the day for a bit of therapeutic slobbiness, and you aren't prepared to be put off by any number of shallow pretentious wankers that deride latter-day instrumental compositions as worthless, this album is a must.

Steve Griffiths



REM take a little time off to indulge in a little of their own peculiar brand of sunbathing.

REM EPONYMOUS (IRS)

To alleviate the suspense, "Eponymous" is in fact a "Best-of" collection that leaves us all wondering just who it is that decides what actually constitutes the best material that a band has produced.

For a record of this kind to be put out at all, several influential stimuli have to be administered. The first of these is the desire for the band to get a quick buck. This is actually far less a decisive factor than the record company wanting to get a quick buck, especially if the band in question are leaving the old stable for a new label. Indeed this is exactly what is happening here. Last of all, and we can already hear the delighted yelps and screeches of small children ripping open their presents on Christmas morning, the dreaded season of object consumerism is already upon us; as it licks its festering talons and stalks the unsuspecting parent around the record store.

Even in this situation REM retain credibility. Rather than letting IRS bodge together a poorly thought-out collection of rehashes, Bucke et al have had a decisive influence in put-

ting together a bag of goodies that really is the definitive "Best of" ensemble. I must admit that the cynics amongst us will say that the inclusion of a collectors item (hib-tone version of 'Radio Free Europe') and different remixes ('Gardening at Night' and 'Finest Worksong') are still a bit of a rip-off. Nevertheless, although we would hope that REM die hards wouldn't succumb to another shameless harvest by a record company, there are many of us who have as yet to get our hands on a decent collection of songs by what is arguably one of the best bands of the eighties. So, now's the time to start writing REM all over your gran's fridge and hum "Fall on Me" around your loved one and hopefully something flat and square of the required consistency will turn up in the ole stocking on Jeessie's birthday. Unfortunately this release does mean that our radio station will get the chance to play "It's The End Of The World As We Know It" at least twenty-five times a day again. Oh well, small mercies.

Steve Griffiths