



Records

Meanwhile, in the vinyl world...

# Bertrand bleats brave new brew



Stuart Ross

The Plazz eyes 50,000 screaming pre-teen fans as 100,000 buttocks (not visible in photo) grind in sweaty unison.

**Grands Succes/Greatest Hits**  
Plastic Bertrand  
(Attic/RKM)

●●● ½

This best-of album, from Brussels' foremost pop-cat, is a sort of catch-up collection for the uninitiated, just as was Graham Parker's *High Times*. It also contains some previously-unreleased material that makes it worth owning, even if you've got the complete set already.

The album's weakness is that it fails to represent Plastic Bertrand's early snivelling-punk days, containing only one song, the notorious hit, "Ca Plane Pour Moi", from his fabulous first elpee, *An I*. Missing are such great tunes, perfect pop anthems, as "Pogo Pogo", "Dance, Dance" and "Wha! Wha!".

But *Grands Succes* is still a great collection, bringing together "Tout Petit La Planete", "Super Cool" and that demento-disco fave, "Stop ou Encore". The Plazz really bleats.

Also included is a new cut, "Hula Hoop", which could very well have been on the debut album, a rousing popper that makes ya wanna jump up and down. And there are two live cuts, adding a nice, well-rounded touch to the album.

With this collection, maybe we can wrench this fine, fun Sinatraesque song-stylist from the grubby 100,000 palms of 50,000 screaming 15-year-old girls. It's almost that perfect.

(And don't miss those wild jacket notes by Ralph "Waldo Emerson" Alfonzo!)

Stuart Ross

**United**  
Woody Shaw  
(Columbia)

●●●

When Columbia first signed Woody Shaw a few years back, there was a lot

of ballyhoo form them that Shaw was their first Great New Hope in trumpet-playing bandleaders. And with Miles out of commission and Freddie Hubbard off slumbering in disco-heaven somewhere, a new trumpet hero was certainly on the menu.

Well, Miles is back now and I say he's been dethroned. Woody Shaw is the Great New Hope, and with his string of excellent Columbia albums, he's suited to the role nicely. This is no case of hype.

*United* is a bit of a change from Shaw's last couple of releases. Gone are the arrangements for multi-piece bands and string sections (however tasteful they were), and the vocals. Gone also, and somewhat sadly, is Woody's entire band from the *Stepping Stones* days. Here Woody is playing with a quartet that includes Steve Turre on trombone and pianist Mulgrew Miller; altoist Gary Bartz lends his lips to two of the numbers, taking a dynamic solo on "Blues for Wood". The new boys are just fine.

As usual, Shaw plays sensitively and inventively on mostly original compositions, although the title tune—a jazz waltz by Wayne Shorter—and a clever version of Cole Porter's "What Is This Thing Called Love" are among the album's bright spots. Shaw's "The Green Street Caper", based on a modified "Green Dolphin Street", almost feels like mid-fifties Miles Davis with its gorgeous muted trumpet.

What's nice about Shaw's music, however, is that it manages to sound so contemporary. It's not so hip that the neighbourhood banshees will wail, but it's hip enough that it will still sound good next year. Yup, Woody's the man and *United* is his most consistently enjoyable and accessible album since *Rosewood*.

Roman Pawlyszyn

**Tin Can Alley**  
Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition  
(ECM)

●● ½

After last year's immensely successful *Special Edition* recording, it comes as a bit of a surprise that drummer Jack DeJohnette has shuffled the band. On *Tin Can Alley*, the second *Special Edition* album, Chico Freeman and John Purcell have taken the reed chairs from Arthur Blyth and David Murray. Jazz fans have eagerly awaited the release of this album and there has been much speculation as to whether it could equal the first. Other than the personnel change, DeJohnette has not strayed too far from the previous record's formula.

As on the first album, DeJohnette has tried in part to capture the mood of another era in jazz. On the song "Tin Can Alley", the band pays homage to Duke Ellington. The pastoral "Pastel Rhapsody" is a tribute to either Keith Jarrett or Bill Evans, judging from DeJohnette's piano work. Both pieces feature excellent blowing by newcomer John Purcell, providing a heavy bottom to the music with his strong baritone. Once again the double sax combination works well for DeJohnette's compositions.

What sets this album apart from the first is, primarily, Jack DeJohnette's contribution of "The Gri Gri Man", a solo venture with

organ and percussion overdubs. A creditable idea, but one that doesn't work.

By this point in the album, the listener is anticipating some more excitement and fireworks but all the band has to offer is "I Know", an overly-long, self-indulgent blues; DeJohnette's vocal and some "authentic" pre-recorded applause cannot save it.

On the whole, this album turns out to be just a reference to people like Duke Ellington. It's a tribute to Arthur Blyth, for without his biting and piercing alto to lend some more character, this edition of *Special Edition* is not special enough.

Steven Hacker

**Pleasant Dreams**  
The Ramones  
(Sire/WEA)

●●●

Okay, guys, I take back everything I said about you being no-talent bums who survived on hype and little else. The Ramones are a real rock band whose last few albums seem to have soared from one inspirational step to another.

From the shadowy front cover of their latest album, *Pleasant Dreams*, produced by Graham Gouldman of 10CC, to the constant uplifting beat imbedded in the grooves, the boys not only play good, but they make the listener feel even better. And the lyrics are a far cry more intelligent than their usual glue-sniffing content.

The Ramones have taken a step towards commerciality by jazzing up their sound. One hopes that their effort won't be vain, and that this fine vinyl will get a chance on the big cheese airwaves.

Elliott Lefko

## In one ear....

● ½ *Inner Sleeve/Where Are The Girls?* (Attic) "Hey, let's quit Herman Brood's band and do an album! I've got a great idea for a cover!" S.R.

●● *Stevie Nicks/Bella Donna* (Modern/WEA) Listening to this third of Fleetwood Mac's songwriting triumvirate is at least three times as much fun as the entire band. Still, the reworkings of "Dreams" are becoming tiresome (disguised here as "Outside the Rain"), and that mellow L.A. sound almost lays back into oblivion by now. R.P.

## RATINGS

●●●● A must-own.

●●● Real good.

●● Hotsy-totsy.

● Donny & Marie.

■ Arf.



She was lost  
from the moment  
she saw him.

## The French Lieutenant's Woman

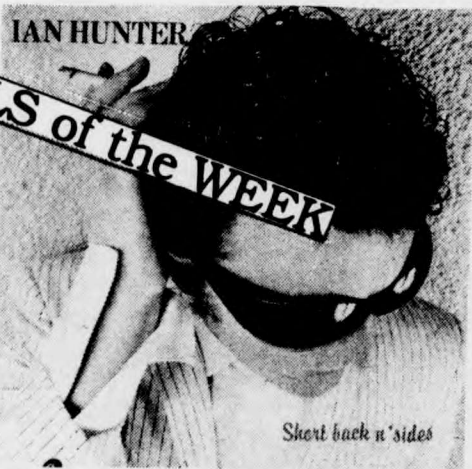
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