

Pop-fluff band make good album horror!

Platinum Blonde Contact

Review by Angelica Santana

Allright. So you're thinking "Great. Just what we need. Another album by the bleach boys. A new addition to the teeny-bopper hall of fame." Admittedly, such an attitude may have been justified in reference to 1985's 'Alien Shores,' but it seems that this time around Platinum Blonde has decided to do things differently.

The boys have trashed the pouting pretty-boy image and have taken a more mature route, concerning themselves with the music rather than their looks. Although they haven't completely returned to the raw sound of their 1982 release 'Standing in the Dark,' they have taken a funkier more R & B approach to this latest release.

The most notable change with 'Contact,' is the departure of drummer Chris Steffler and the addition of new drummer Sacha (whose last name, even his best friends can't pronounce, much less spell). Despite rumours, Chris Steffler was not given the boot by his former band-mates, but in-

stead has decided to pursue a solo career as a vocalist with the aid of Platinum Blonde frontman Mark Holmes. Also, replacement drummer Sacha is no newcomer to the band, having been a member of their technical crew for a number of years and just recently promoted to official band member.

Another notable change with the release of 'Contact' is the fact that the band has switched labels from Columbia to Epic.

This album may well be the one that helps the Blondes attain the audience that they have been striving for in the past. Although they may lose some of the following that they gained with 'Alien Shores' (mostly teenaged girls), they are definitely on the road to success with an older, more discriminating crowd.

Having never really been a band known for their ballads, the Blondes pull off two on this album with total ease - "If You Go This Time" and "I Might Have You" being two of the most beautiful songs I have

heard in quite a while. Also worth checking out are the songs "Diamonds," "System" and "Fire," a remake of the old Ohio Players hit featuring a guest appearance by the vocalist of said band.

The most disappointing effort on the album would definitely be the song "Tough Enough," having a bass-line that is strangely reminiscent of 1985's hit "Crying Over You." Equally disappointing (to this writer, anyway) is the title track of the album "Contact," despite the fact that it is the first release and is already rapidly climbing the charts.

All in all (even though my opinion may be just a little bit biased), I would strongly encourage anyone who has dismissed this band in the past as pop-fluff, to give this album a serious listen. While you're at it, try to keep in mind that just two short years ago this band was really nothing more than the basis for many a Canadian teenager's wet dream.

On a scale of one to-ten, I would give this album a 9.95.



I want the pleasure!

I want the pain!

No Means No--Sex Mad
(Psyche Industry)

"I want the pleasure! / I want the pain! / I'm going SEX MAD! SEX MAD. . ."

With these words, No Means No, a group from Vancouver, kick off their latest release, Sex Mad. The band's previous album featured some of the bizarrest dirge/funk/fucked-up rock I have ever had the pleasure to hear, and this, their second album, lives up to

everything they've done before and more!

The title track (quoted above) kicks in with a revved up, groovy bass riff while the vocalist details his sexual frustration in decidedly feverish tones. Distortion, power and overt aggression are the key words here.

The second cut, Dad, really blew me away (like nothing has for a long, long time. . .). While musically more typical punk/thrash (very reminiscent of '77 - '78 stuff) the absolutely psychotic description of an abusive father - from the victim's point of view - is unremittingly intense.

"Shut up you bitch! I'll kill you. . ."

"Please, dad, please. . . I'm the one that's bad!" Don't hit her dad. . .!! Leave mum alone!"

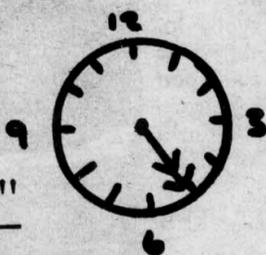
Not to be tied down to a routine sound, the boys include an instrumental jazzy(?) piece called No F***ing, that really smokes. Instrumentally, lyrically and imaginatively No Means No are leagues better than most so-called experimental bands around. Intense. Intelligent and dark without being morose. This album is plain fantastic. Buy it. (My favourite cut is Self-Pity)

Richard Thornley

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