



FIREHOSE from left to right: Ed Fromohio, Mike Watt, George Hurley. Their new album is *If'n* (SST).

New Releases

by Andrew M. Duke

Alta Moda, headed by Molly Johnson (she sang back-up on Breeding Ground's "Happy Now I Know") and Norman Orenstein, have released their debut album (Current/CBS). Unfortunately, Johnson's sensuous vocals must fight with Orenstein's ever-growling guitar and much over-programmed slickness.

A Split-Second have released the industrial-tinged *Ballistic Statues* (Antler/Fringe Product). Basically a project by Mark Ickx, the LP is fine until the gloomy lyrics are paired with up-tempo dance rhythms and out-of-place guitar solos. Great sampling is evident, with the title track using Richard Nixon's Water-gate speeches.

The third LP from London's The Bolshoi, *Lindy's Party* (Polygram), is extremely varied musically, full of bounce (check out "Please"), and big-sounding, and comes across as the Psychedelic Furs (back when they were good) meeting Echo and the Bunnymen.

I Keep Thinking It's Tuesday (I.R.S./MCA) is yet another attempt by Doctor and the Medics to sound psychedelic, and though the lyrics are not as horrible as last year's *Laughing at the Pieces* LP and the music is much better, there's still room for improvement. The *Dogs in Space* soundtrack (Atlantic-/WEA) is well worth listening to.

featuring INXS' Michael Hutchence, Iggy Pop, Brian Eno, Gang of Four, and lots more.

If'n (SST) is the amazing new record from FIREHOSE. One will find lots of variety, great guitar craftwork, and fun: "For the Singer of REM" is a parody of guess who?



Australia's Single Gun Theory

The relatively unknown Game Theory have released a great double LP in *Lolita Nation* (Enigma/Capitol). The music is rather like free-form guitar meets garage rock meets lots of energy. The varied vocalists and their styles make songs with titles such as "Watch Who You're Calling Space Garbage" seem as normal as "My Baby Left Me"; the next Violent Femmes?

Though Gene Loves Jezebel have made some radical commercially-oriented changes for *The House of Dolls* (Polygram), their spark and vitality seem to make songs such as "The Motion of Love", "Twenty Killer Hurts" and "Gorgeous" comparable to the past and "Worth Waiting For".

Jeffrey Hatcher and the Big Beat had to go to New York for a record deal, but the result, *Cross Our Hearts* (Upside) is an introspective, well-thought-out, pleasing mix of crooning and guitar strings.

Toronto's Hype have unleashed the 16-track *Burned* (Fringe Product) with speed metal meets hardcore and socially-conscious lyrics (that are often hard to make out) attacking free trade and STDs. They even cover "Wipeout" and pay tribute to Jello Biafra's character with "Intermission".

It seems everyone in the top-40 market is trying to make their music more accessible by making it funkier. INXS have followed this trend with *Kick* (Atlantic/WEA); it stands a chance with a barrage of radio-ready tracks, though lyrics as boring as "sometimes you kick, sometimes you get kicked" will not help.

The final Mercyland single is "Black on Black on Black" (Mustang). They have disbanded, but plan on releasing a 32-track R.I.P. cassette.

Vancouver's Numb offer an incredible array of samples (including TV clips concerning Oral Roberts' scam), noises, provoking song titles ("God is Dead"), and general percussive aggression on their debut (Art Lively/New Rose). Unlike Skinny Puppy, Numb avoids aiming for the dance floor and employs lots of distortion on an LP that could revive Canadian industrialism.



Psyche: "decaying society" music

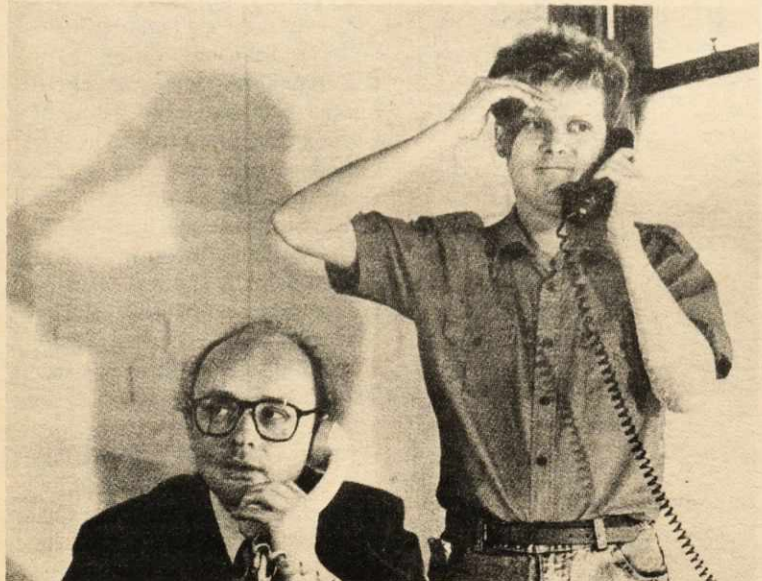
The "Uncivilized" 12" (New Rose) is the latest from Anthony Red and Evan Panic, two brothers originally from Waterloo, who perform dance music for a decaying society as Psyche.

Bikini Red (WEA) is the result of a trip the Screaming Blue Messiahs took to the USA, evident in great songs such as "I Wanna Be a Flintstone", "I Can Speak American", and "Jesus Chrysler Drives a Dodge".

New on the Nettwerk label: *Bad Mood Guy* from Severed Heads, an LP that will have you dancing to the likes of "Hot with Fleas", and two politically-oriented albums, the soothing, swirling, rhythmic Single Gun Theory's *Exorcise This Wasteland* and *Digitalis Ambigua Gold and Poison* from SPK (Sozialistisches Patienten Kollektiv). The latter's ambient portions are easier to appreciate than the sexual-aggression-gone-silly of "Breathless".

After the "Holy Money (A Screw)" 12", it seems strange that the Swans would create a concept album and call it *Children of God* (Caroline/Fringe Product).

Tired Eyes, Slowly Burning (Nettwerk/Capitol) is the first LP from The Tear Garden, Cevin Key of Skinny Puppy and Edward Ka-spel of The Legendary Pink Dots. They've left most of the theatrics behind but still offer an excellent album, especially with the epic "You and Me and Rainbows".



Severed Heads release *Bad Mood Guy* (Nettwerk/Capitol).

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