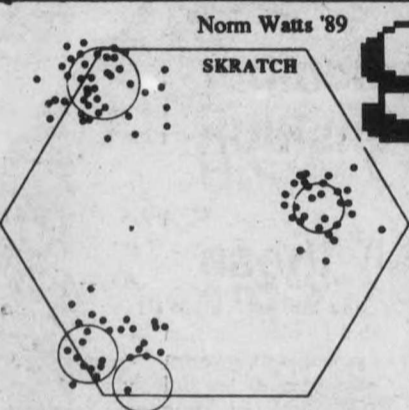


MEAT



SKRATCH

TOP TWENTY

Uncle Stevie drinks lots of eggnog
dives into his collection
and goes nostalgia mental!

1. Cocteau Twins - *Treasure* (4 AD)

Wouldn't it have been nice if this record had reflected the mood of the entire decade? Soft and harmonious lullabies of the ethereal nature poked up into the stratosphere by Liz Frazer's ululating siren song. Beautiful and absolutely flaw-less.

2. Blue Nile - *Walk Across the Rooftops* (Linn)

Some records are able to keep you spell bound momentarily but very rarely does one have the same effect for over four years. Sublime melodies accompanied by some of the most sincere whining you will ever hear. Be on the look out for the latest release which, having been promised for the past two years, has got to be one of the key events of the next decade.

3. Yello - *Stella* (Elektra)

The seminal and first really complete work from Meier and Blank that includes blistering dance standards and three-minute cinematic masterpieces that make one feel as if the after-noon has been spent in the middle of the Viet Nam war.

4. Killing Joke - *What's this for* (Malicious Damage)

Throughout the history of rock there has always been angry bands. But one would be hard pressed to find anything that is quite as cathartic as some of Richter-heavy numbers on this classic. For once the guitar does sound like a huge enraged homer and the drums just bust your face off.

5. Bruce Springsteen - *Nebraska* (Columbia)

Stop fooling yourself, he is bloody brilliant. Stark and foreboding this is Broocooe sitting in his bedroom on a rainy day and spinning some pretty darn melancholic yarns.

6. Pixies - *Surfer Rosa* (4 AD)

Suddenly it was fun to beat your head against a wall to short and horribly infectious pop-songs again and still retain credibility. Weird but magnificent.

7. REM - *Life's Rich Pageant* (IRS)

Pure unbridled skill, a healthy conscience and right-out-in-left-field metaphors make REM one of the most important bands of the eighties. This one is my favourite.

8. Brian Eno and Harold Budd - *Plateaux of Mirror* (EG)

The principle of Eno's ambient work also showcases a mighty talent

for the appreciation of the mood inducing and environment-conditioning power at the root of all music. "Music to be listened to or ignored" is his maxim but in all seriousness the fourth track on side two makes me burst into tears.

9. Dead Can Dance - *Within the Realm of a Dying Sun* (4AD)

It is hard to say why this band hasn't been as popular as Enya but then everyone needs a breakaway hit to bring in the plebs. Picture expansive panoramas of Gothic and baroque loveliness, bass-drones, tolling bells and you've got that DCD feeling. A must for the groady existentialist in your family.

10. Joy Division - *Closer* (Factory)

Would have been the most important band of the decade had Ian Curtis not committed suicide right at the beginning of it (remaining members go on to form New Order). This is the first example of gentle consternation, paranoia and yes more existentialism that I was to first encounter as a budding poppicker and side one still contains some of the most effective music I've ever heard.

11. The Cure - *Seventeen Seconds/Faith/Pornography* (Fiction)

O.K. I'm cheating a bit here but in my mind where would one be without the other? This was the glorious period where Bob Smith et. al. stopped sounding like a sixth-form band and evolved into the perfect teenangst band. Come on admit it. Robert doesn't sound good singing pop songs. Even the return to form in herent o n the brilliant "Dis-integration" doesn't live up to these early icons.

12. Colourbox - *Colourbox* (Polygram)

Think of the biggest trend of the decade that has lately borne huge fleshy fruit and one would undoubtedly come up with sampling. At it's most interesting this media-guerilla art-form takes chunks of information from anywhere and pounds it all together to produce a new perspective be it amusing or inflammatory. Steve and Martin Young of Colourbox were one of the first to realize the potential importance of the genre and it is a shame that only one of them went on to attain notoriety as part of the PUMP-UP-THE-VOLUME team. Loretta Graeme, also appearing on this opus, is one of the best soul-singers I've ever heard.

13. Public Enemy - *It'll Take a Nation of Millions to Hold us Back* (Def Jam)

Rap: sexist to the point of being misogynist, violent to the point of gratuitous blood-letting but basically brutally stupid. But it sounds great. When a band is able to sidestep (slightly) these unfortunate but completely justified labels and inject a bit of barbed social consciousness then obviously we sit up and take note especially if the construction is shit-hot. Start here with Public Enemy.

14. Jesus and Mary Chain - *Psychocandy* (Blanco y Negro)

It is not unlike standing in front of a huge wave a force so pure and intransigent that the experience is almost cleansing. No one forgets the first time they heard the JAMC. Enough said.

15. Tom Waits - *Swordfish Trombones* (Island)

Tall twisted tales that are so warped you take the "real-life" bait hook line and sinker which makes the experience that much more exhilarating and unsettling. Flannery O'Connor and Faulkner during peak time viewing - it's a gas!

16. Pet Shop Boys - *Introspective* (Manhattan)

After a while it was un-avoidable that some clever bastards were going to be able to start producing perfect pop songs for the European market (i.e. formulaic but quirky enough to distinguish it from the real production-line efforts). Their name is the Pet Shop Boys and it rather frightens me to think of what they might be capable of in the not-too-distant future.

17. The Smiths - *The Smiths* (Rough Trade)

Oscar Wilde really didn't appreciate the full extent of his influence and Steven Morrissey is a prime example. Nutty off-kilter lyrics that in all honesty don't really sound as if they should be as significant as they're supposed to be. Johnny Marr is the other necessary half of this humongous force providing melodies that are the perfect complement to Morrissey's Freudian (and other) ramblings. Expect a reunion in early 1990.

18. Scraping Foetus off the Wheel - *Hole* (Self-immolation)

Jim Thurwell is the mis-creant kaleidoscope of contemporary culture making breath-taking mosaics out of just about everything you've ever heard. Luckily he does this with noises that sound like fifty-two ball elephants tripping over a tree stump and cupboards full of

saucepans falling out of sixteen storey building so the effect is never mediocre.

19. Rickie Lee Jones - *Pirates/The Magazine* (Warner Brothers)

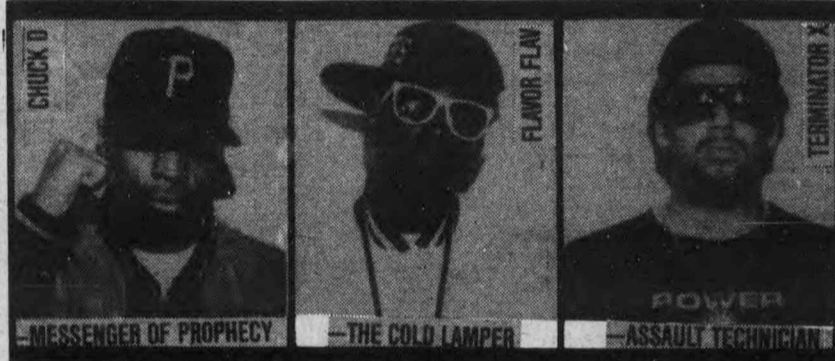
Hey Mum! He's cheating again! - I know but lookit. Take the best half from each album and you've got a make-believe elpee that barely nothing touches. Songs that cradle the listeners in a cloud of pink ether or

sends them flying over those talcum-sparkling fields like the camera in a Joel and Ethan Coen film.

20. Gary Clail - *Tackhead* (Sonnd System (Nettwerk))

Suddenly the speakers go nightmare disney; the woofers extruding like drooling pro-bosci as the cabinets stretch and squeal and generally bounce all over the shagpile like Lucasesque pogo sticks from hell. Pretty damned clockin' good.

Public Enemy

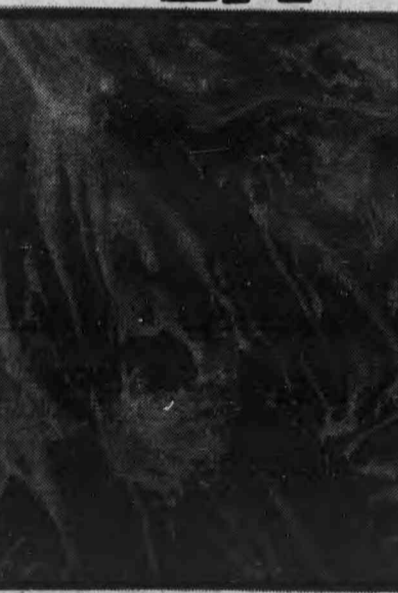


MEAT

RETROPRaisal

SUPPLEMENT Backstreet Records' Tommy Stillwell picks out his faves.

1. Neneh Hagen - *Nunsexmonkrock*
2. Pretenders - *Pretenders*
3. Pixies - *Doolittle*
4. Pixies - *Surfer Rosa*
5. Joan Jett - *Bad Reputation*
6. Slow-Against *The Glass*
7. Holly Beth Vincent - *Holly and the Italians*
8. X - *Under the Big Black Sun*
9. Red Kross - *Neurotica*
10. Prince - *Sign O' the Times*
11. Dream Syndicate - *Days of Wine and Roses*
12. Husker Du - *Candy Apple Grey*
13. Siouxsie and the Banshees - *Ju Ju*
14. The Nils - *Sell out Young/The Nils*
15. Yazz - *Upstairs at Eric's*
16. SNFU - *If You Swear, You'll Catch No Fish*
17. Jesus and Mary Chain - *Psycho candy*
18. The Divinyls - *Desperate*
19. Dinosaur Jr. - *You're Living All Over Me*
20. The Lemonheads - *Lick*



The Reid Brothers of JAMC: sonic mayhem for the eighties - with melody!



Liz Frazer of the Cocteau Twins: a number one notority

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