

The return of Hunter S. Thompson

The Curse of Lono
A book by Hunter S. Thompson

Review by Robert Morell

Hunter S. Thompson is one of the few counter-culture authors of the 1960's to have survived

into the 1980's. In *The Curse of Lono* (Bantam, 160 pages, \$9.95), his fifth book, Thompson has adopted a new format and has moved in a slightly different direction.

Ralph Steadman, Thompson's

long-time associate, gets equal-billing for his full-colour black and white illustrations throughout.

As for the text itself, Thompson writes in the first person, having abandoned his alter ego (Raoul Duke) and companion Dr. Gonzo, made famous in the enormously successful *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*.

Most Thompson aficionados, however, will probably be at least a little disappointed by this effort. Though it most closely resembles *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*—since in this one Thompson and Steadman go to Hawaii to cover the Honolulu Marathon for *Running Magazine*—it does not compare favourably with that classic work.

One can argue that Thompson takes questionable stands on the abuse of liquor, drugs and women, and this book will certainly further that reputation. Aside from that, it may be that Thompson's *schtick* has lost its fire, for the bulk of the book seems predictable and repetitious.

Rather than summarize the plot, it is sufficient to say that it drags in spots. In the last two-thirds, the author describes his boring, rain-soaked stay on the Lono coast in Hawaii, and his realization," after seven months,

that he is the reincarnation of the ancient Hawaiian god Lono, a revelation which does not succeed in compensating for the dreariness of the story to that

point.

While Steadman's artwork brightens it up, this book will not live up to the high expectations of Thompson's followers.

Nina Hagen once again fearless

Nina Hagen, the yodelling barmaid, beerdrinking tinsel-haired sphinx has belched forth another musical cauldron full of enchantments. "New York/New York" is being played on the

radio, regrettably however only in the English version, which is less exciting than the German pressing that we at CKDU have.

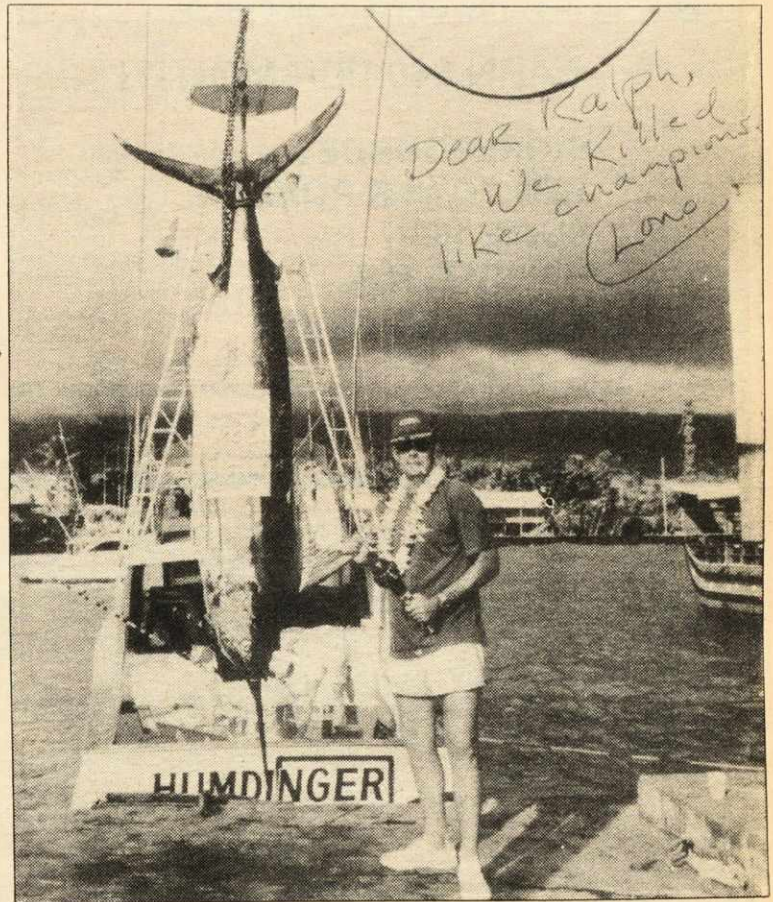
In this song, Nina the fabulous rip-off artist takes a stab at New York City (which is where she wants to be), just as in "Freuhling in Paris" she laughs down the cliché of springtime Paris romances. "Was Es Ist". Manic funk/rap. Sarcastic spiritual advice: vegetarians are sapped of their carrot juice. In "Lorelei" Nina musters up the remainders of her socio-political integrity and proclaims the truth. The gospel according to Nina:

we must change.

On *Angstlos*, Nina seems to have more control over her musicians compared to the stylistic limitations apparent in her first two albums. She works with Giorgio Moroder, a sure passage to radio airplay. This, however, does not constrain the exuberance of her operatic vocal style. In fact, operatic references abound, such as the opening passage of "Zarah", a wonderfully-romantic song. Coming close to theft of style, she lowers her voice to approach that of Grace Jones in "My Sensation", the sexiest song on the album.

Angstlos leaves you desiring more, which may be due to the fact that it is quite short. But satisfying, as it is jam-packed and survives even the zillionth listen.

For an in-depth aural review of *Angstlos*, listen to CKDU's *Hot Off the Presses*, Monday, March 19, at 8:00 pm.



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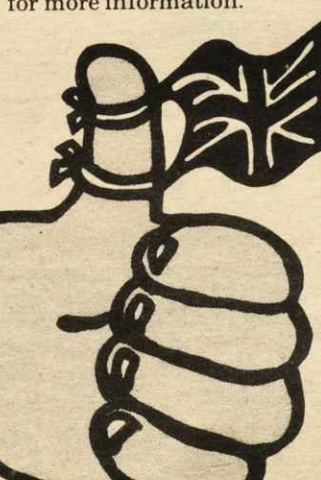
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