

LET'S REVIEW SOME TUNES



Chewed.



Swallowed



Shit Sandwich

Paul McCartney "Off the Ground" (Capitol)

Go back to the Beatles Paul, or at least join John would you please. Even the promo pack compares this work to the Beatles, and as a die hard Beatles fan I find this comparison insulting to my intelligence. Paul McCartney was one fourth of the Beatles, a band which ended with the last live performance in 1969 and their last Album "Let it Be" released in 1970. It's 1993 now and if the best that Paul can do twenty three years later is to compare the themes of songs from this album to "Let it be" and "Hey Jude". He ought to retire.



Poison "Native Tongue" (Capitol) By Mark Savoie

What do you do if you're an extremely popular rock group that gets all the respect of an engineer at a literary society? The group Poison has elected to put out a more mature, but less obviously appealing, effort in their latest album Native Tongue.

Poison has attracted a huge following in the past with the release of such questionable classics as "Every Rose Has Its Thorn" and "Unskinny Bop." Unfortunately for a band that craves respect, these songs have lead to Poison's reputation as merely a good junior high/high school glam rock band. In other words, something for elementary school kids to graduate to when they're though with Michael Jackson.

Thus, in this album the band has tried to avoid their trademark, catchy choruses to a great extent. Even the mandatory torch ballad on this album ("Stand") actually has lyrics to which it is almost worthwhile to listen.

The effort for maturity - and through that, respect - has to be commended. And truth be told this is not a bad effort. However, it also ain't Zeppelin. [Note to engineers: the use of 'ain't is intentional, and is here used as a literary device.] The lyrics are convoluted and often out of sync with any recognizable metre; the guitar riffs don't seem to have any direction; and their claim of releasing a bluesy album is ludicrous at best.

The problem that Poison faces is that they simply don't have the talent necessary to put together a solid rock album having musical integrity. Instead, they have put out an ordinary, middle-of-the-pack, rock album. Whereas they had been a very good

juniorhigh school band that stood out from the crowd, they are now nothing special. Nothing for high school girls to lose their virginity to, and nothing for us university students to mock. Just a band. Nothing special.



The Pooh Sticks "Million Seller" (Capitol) By Mark Savoie

It was only with a great deal of trepidation [and the fact Alistair was going to buy me a coffee] that I agreed to review The Pooh Sticks' Million Seller. I mean, The Pooh Sticks? C'mon! With a name like that they've got to be shitty.

This album represents an attempt by this band for more commercial airplay on the AM bands. Unfortunately for this band, their talents are not conducive to this type of popular venue. Musically, they are fairly tight but unspectacular, and the vocals are second rate at best. Bob Dylan was able to go mainstream with this combination, but The Pooh Sticks' lyrics are not nearly angst ridden enough to make up for these deficits.

An exception to this is "When the Girl Wants to be Free," which is a potentially good torch ballad. It is, however, hampered by several flaws. The piano - while haunting - is overly simple, and the vocals lack any emotive power. The other problem is that it ends after a brief 2:11. This is a problem for almost the entire album, as nine of the thirteen tracks are under three minutes in length. Surely a band should be able to come up with enough lyrics to fill three - five minutes of airtime.

Despite their failure to produce a truly commercial effort this remains a good album. Although not listed as an influence the music and vocals are very reminiscent of The Monks. This is especially true of "Let the Good Times Roll," a tune destined for heavy FM play. The Monks were a successful FM band that did not translate well to mainstream AM. The same is true of The Pooh Sticks.



Tasmin Archer "Great Expectations" (Capitol)

This tape was submitted to the Spring Break drivin' to Toronto test. Ms. Archer's debut album's first cut "Sleeping Satellite" is all over Top 40 radio - she's being touted by her label as the "next big thing" (but isn't everybody?). Of the six cuts on side one only

"When it come down to it" is bearable. The rest of it is like Cheez Whiz - overprocessed. I think her voice might be OK if you could hear it through the production do-daddery.

The reason why I can only comment on side one is because Capitol pulled the old "let's send sub-standard quality pressings out as review copies trick." And when you send out four for a dollar K-Mart quality cassettes they threaten to explode in your machine. Doesn't matter, Tasmin didn't sound like side two was very promising anyway.

The verdict on the drive test - it's out there somewhere on the 401, go get it if you want it



The Watchmen "MacLaren Furnace Room" (MCA)

The promo sheet I got with the Watchmens new album starts off saying: "If Pat Nunzia of The Smithereens wrote a song for Megadeath what would it be like... the Watchmen's new record MacLaren Furnace Room." Sounds like a bad joke? Not to anyone who's heard it. No it's much more like a terrible joke! I've heard this stuff before from a dozen different bands. While the lyrics are different the music is a blatant rip off or at least too close a facsimile to be a coincidence.



EMF "Stigma" (EMI)

by Ewald Gaudet

Coined as "the regular bad boys of the UK tabloid press," EMF's second release Stigma is hard hitting techno rock and roll with a lot of variation in beat. The lyrics in songs like "They're Here" and "The Light that Burns Twice as Bright" are almost incoherent because the bass and guitar overwhelms the vocalist. But then again that seems to be the entire point of techno. The biggest problem with this album is that many of the songs are just too melodramatic. For instance, "The Light that Burns Twice as Bright" varies from a enjoyable slow beat to a quick one, but it drags on for too long thus undermining any effect it had first produced. Both "Never Know" and "Blue Highs" are undoubtedly the best songs on the album. There is quite a bit of repetition in the lyrics of "Blue High" but they are sung quickly so the effect is nice. Overall, the album is worth a listen if you like techno. It is quite obvious though that EMF is a relatively new band from their music and Stigma is like Jesus Jones, but without the artistic integrity.

