

Vain
No Respect
Island Records

Yeah, another one of those heavy metal pop bands from California. You know it's bad news when the hair and make-up guy gets credit on the album cover. These guys look like extras from the Motley Crue/Poison school of glam rockers, complete with long hair, lipstick, spandex, and clothing made of dead animals. Sorry, boys, but it takes more than an image to be a good band.

Technically, Vain is very tight. Every guitar riff and drum roll is seamless. Davy Vain, on vocals, has sort of a heavy metal version of

Corey Hart's croon. Too bad they can't do anything original with all that musical ability. It's all the standard pop-power stuff, with a crunchy rhythm guitar under a screaming lead, arranged in predictable fashion.

All of Vain's songs are cliché-ridden ditties about sex and love. Songs like "Beat the Bullet," "Laws Against Love," and "Without You" don't say anything that hasn't been said a hundred times before. The lives of the bandmembers must revolve around trying to pick up women. If that's as deep as your thoughts run, buy this album; you'll love it. However, if you want lyrics that leave you with something to think about, give it a miss.

- Greg Pohl

Record Reviews

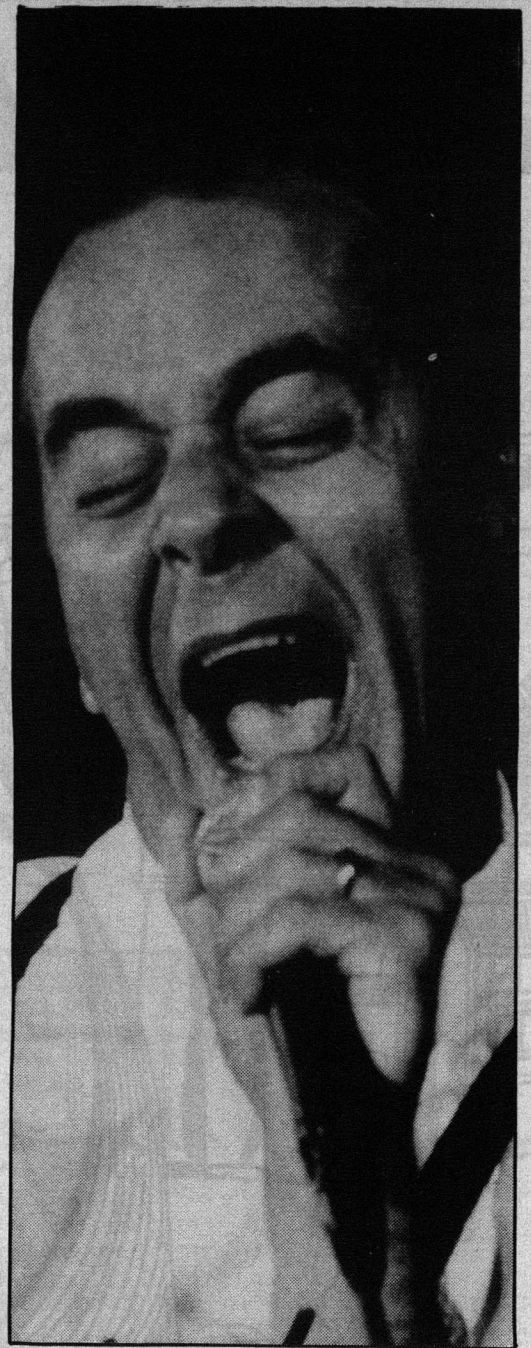
Trooper
The Last of the Gypsies
Great Pacific/WEA

Every 70's child has to remember Trooper. They were one of the first "CANCON bands;" bands that never would have made it if the government didn't insist that radio stations play a certain amount of Canadian content. Trooper played good pop music that wasn't particularly memorable in itself, but is capable of evoking all those teen-aged memories in people like me. Their *Flying Colors* LP was one of the first records I owned.

But enough reminiscing already! It's 1989, and Trooper is back with a new album. The cynic in me suggests that they probably just ran out of royalty money, so they decided to market their past glory a la The Stones and The Who. But hey, this album isn't bad at all! They aren't doing anything they haven't done before, but they come across as sincere and believable. The songs on *Gypsies* aren't exactly philosophical epics, but they're about real situations and genuine points of view. After doing the 'arena rock' thing for years, Trooper got back to the basics, and found that they hadn't lost their souls to corporate music.

Ra McGuire and Brian Smith are the only originals, but their vocals, guitars, and song-writing were the bulk of the old Trooper sound anyway. They manage to keep this LP sounding diverse by throwing in a couple of slow numbers, some blues influence, and a switch between lead and backup vocal duties. A sincere effort, and every bit as good as anything else Trooper has done.

- Greg Pohl



Ra McGuire of Trooper

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