

## arts

# Cope and the Cross

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with wicked piano work and industrial strength guitar reverb with an underlying sax and horn harmony, more crunchingly reverbed synth trips, and a surprisingly good and tonally sure high falsetto by Cope. The purpose of this is to make wild music, but it also explains Cope's relationship with the world. Cope has recovered from the dizzyfying and disillusioned 20th Century world which led him into chemical addiction: "I used to take so much acid it frightens me..."; and he has even put on some weight and stopped looking like a heroin addict. No way! You mean this Mother Goddess/Mother Earth stuff is actually good for you?? Cope is not afraid to share his experiences and in an experimental style Phase Two represents the crazy present world in a fashion that might be different from how we do it, but in one that is definitely within our heads. We just need to take the plugs out of our ears. If Christ is "all," as one church on Windsor St. once said on its advertising sign, then a distorted, screwed up, and broken world should be no match.

## "immediately listenable"

Phase Three (as Phase Two ends with the aforementioned song "Julian H. Cope") starts out by dregging back up "Poet is Priest" as if it were a great jam session, and everyone decided to leave it in. The result is called "The Subtle Energies Commission" and I'm not sure what it's supposed to do, but I know I like it. Phase Three seems a little misdirected with the simple break into a more *Peggy Suicide* sounding song called "Fa-Fa-Fa-Fine" but it is only a short jaunt before getting into the really good stuff. The last three songs of Phase Three, above everything else (including the really neat pictures of Pre-Christian archaeological sites in the dustjacket), are the best reason to listen to *Jehovahkill*. They are simply brilliant.

"Fear Loves This Place" is the single-esque song of the album, but like "Beautiful Love" from *Peggy S.* it

is much more than that. It is one of the few songs with a standard rock drum beat, and this is the reason it is immediately listenable, like most of *Peggy S.*, and unlike most of *Jehovahkill*. It is as good as any chorus song Cope has ever written with a fierce crescendoing/decrecendoing rhythm and crashing cymbals and Cope singing the most deep and resonant line he probably ever has:

"So a man hit a woman, again  
and descended from above...  
...We live in one Hell of a  
Heaven,  
We live in one World not one  
Jail,  
You hear me cry out, yeah yeah  
I'm praying,  
Fear loves this place."

And yet, Cope manages to bring the fierce song to an angelic ending, but he does so with the knowledge of what's to come: "The Tower".

At 10 minutes 17 seconds "The Tower" is an EP unto itself. It is also a seven-thousand year old recapitulation of a spirit that Cope believes is within him. Now I've been speaking all along of this resolution that Cope has made with the past without clearly delineating it. Cope has embraced the cross, but not the one of Christ, and he has refuted Christ as the only God, and as the God for him. The Tower is destroyed. Cope does so on the principle of plaintive argument in Phase One, and through the wild experimentation of Phase Two that is far too free for any rigid Christian restrictions. Cope has clearly been stating that he made this resolution and that *Jehovahkill* is the path of enlightenment for him, and him only. While *Peggy Suicide* lashed out angrily at the world in a search for a reasonable, responsible, and just plain kind love force,

## "Trying hard not to freak out"

*Jehovahkill* knew where it was going all along - to the Pre-Christian worship of the Mother Goddess, and this is where the anger at the death of Mother Earth (*Peggy Suicide*) has gone. In Renaissance religious terms, *Peggy Suicide* has been assumed up from out of the ozone hole in her

head and into the everlasting form of the Mother Goddess. Cope bases his new found love for the cross and for the Mother on archaeological sites of Old England, and for the feelings that have been rekindled within him. Quite literally, Cope has been enthused by the Mother Goddess, she is within him, dormant no more!

Now I know that this may really sound a) sacrilegious to some and b) kooky to others, but this is what Cope presents, and the sincerity and tolerance is there to back it up. This is not mindless bashing or kooky channeling, it is the assumption and enthusiasm of belief. "The Tower" is the presentation of this process, and is worth listening to, if just for comparative reasons. Cope himself says "And trying hard not to freak out" but he is unwilling to cynicize in 20th C. fashion, and he is not to be attacked for this. Belief is a wonderful thing, and he's not trampling on anyone's shoes, especially when com-

pared with the destruction and havoc Christianity has left us.

To end the album, Cope provides a treat to all readers of T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land". In the 48 second "Peggy Suicide is Missing" Cope gets in a joyous (and slightly coy) dig at Eliot, that sends shivers down the spine. It is a wonderful end and counterbalance to the fire and brim-

## "a joyous dig at T.S. Eliot"

stone brought out in "Fear Loves This Place" and "The Tower".

At first, I found this album not difficult to listen to, but difficult to love. It does not rush out and lustily grab at the throat like *Peggy Suicide* does, and the music is not as directly compelling. It deliberately avoids hooks, thereby refuting immediacy

but gaining added spill-over of spiritual emotion. This initially led me to finding *Jehovahkill* less rewarding, but now that the album has sunk in, it is as enjoyable and as interesting as *Peggy S.* It is also different, and satisfied and complete in its conclusions, something that *Peggy S.* cannot be. It slides its way in and then completely compels your understanding by meshing with your thoughts, appreciating your experience and showing the universe in a single aspect from Cope's and your internal eyes. The jamming together of savage instrumental beats and plaintive voice acousticals, and meshing these with mostly non-chorus style disformative song structures makes it a challenging and apparently doubly opaque and transparent work. To critique it in linear fashion as I did for *Peggy S.* (I gave that an A+) is to deny what *Jehovahkill* is about, a non-linear positive warp experience. Hopefully a three cheers will do.



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